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# LONGER ENGLISH ESSAYS

## INTRODUCTION.

Several attempts have been made to define the nature and scope of the essay. But since the days of Bacon, who is for all practical purposes the first of the English Essayists, so much miscellaneous prose has been produced and accepted under this name that no satisfactory definition is possible. Perhaps the least unsatisfactory is that of Dr. Johnson, in whose words an essay is a loose sally of the mind. This definition was obviously not the one recognised by writers of the first half of the nineteenth century when the essay took a very mature, elaborate, and compact form.

The fact is that the literary conceptions and judgments of one age seldom fit another. Even the writers themselves are not sure of the forms in which they work. For example, Bacon has left behind three different drafts of his essays. The first is a series of notes barely strung together; the second, produced ten years later, give us the same subjects with more of the various stages in the logical development of thought. But there is hardly any attempt at grace or charm of manner. The final draft of the essays adds to the thought such delicate touches as turn mere synopses into literature. During the years that elapsed between the first draft and the last, Bacon's conception of the essay

had obviously received considerable modifications particularly from the fashions in France. Imagination, personal idiosyncracies in the observation of life, peculiar turns of thought and phrase excluded from the first sketch, completely change the work in its final form

Thus any attempt at a definition is bound to fail unless it is guided by the historical sense. It is clear that Addison and Steele did not regard the essay half as seriously as Lamb and Hazlitt. They did not look upon it from the same point of view. They had, no doubt, a vague feeling that the essay has a form or technique of its own—but they could not have defined it any more than a poet can define the form and technique of the lyrics that he writes. They aimed at the achievement of a very essential fact in literature—that is, the satisfying of a need the existence of which is recognised equally by the writer and his readers.

The task of the essayist is by no means easy. He has to suggest a complete discussion of his theme without exhausting it. He has to reveal his inmost thoughts and feelings without being too flagrantly egotistical. He must produce work faultless in style and form without seeming to make much effort.

The essay, in its perfect examples known to us, is not a matter, however, of style and form. It may be completely formless and rambling in a style light, airy, and graceful. Or it may be an exquisitely worked whole in a deep and passionate vein. It may even present a subject in grandiloquent, elaborate, ornate periods, so as to achieve only an intellectual satisfaction. But whatever form, or want of form, it assumes, it must have an aim. Like any other writer,

the essayist must set out on his task with a purpose. His purpose will justify the vehicle of thought selected by him. Newman's *Literature* is so different in every way from Lamb's *Christ Hospital*, Miss Mitford's *A Country Cricket Match* from Wells' *Jungle*, and yet they are all equally successful in as much as the writers achieve what they set out to do. It would be idle to compare their excellence in fields so diverse, or to imagine that we should imitate one rather than another. Their measure of success is the satisfaction we receive from their work; the measure of our success as essayists is not the closeness with which we can follow any one of them, but the satisfaction we can impart to our readers.

Is the essay then dependent wholly on the satisfaction of that vague something in our natures which critics call literary taste? Yes, to a large extent the creation and appreciation of an essay proceeds from that faultless taste which discriminates between what may be done, and what may well be left untouched. A beginner tempted by the simplicity of style, the easy urbanity of manner, and the inconsequential flow of thought in a Lucas begins to attempt class compositions in his style, and is surprised when nobody seems to be interested in what he turns out. Or closely modelling himself on Newman or Macaulay, he produces an essay with a series of paragraphs, beautifully interlinked by faultless logic, and is equally surprised at the dullness or pomposity of his achievement. His failure can be attributed to a lack in taste and judgment. If he has the requisite gifts of nature, and if he perseveres, he may acquire both taste and judgment and be himself; but he can never be like this, that, or the other

essayist howsoever sedulously, like an ape, he might imitate him

Thus the essay is essentially personal. Even the most impersonal essay, such as many of Macaulay's reviews of books are, is a production peculiarly personal. The author is unmistakably there in every word that he writes. In the essay the writer reveals himself even more surely than in a lyric: the essay has no other unity or cohering force.

And yet we can easily discern two main types of the essay in English —

1 The type in which the writer *essays* a theme logically, and develops it as a unit of thought. Such essays may easily be elaborated into books on the subject. They are nuclei of something bigger, something more important. The shorter presentiment is due to lack of time and space, and not to any lack of thinking out of the subject by the writer. Milton's *Tractate on Education*; Locke's *Essay of the Human Understanding*; Macaulay's *Essays on Clive, Warren Hastings* and other historical figures, Newman's *Essays on the Idea of a University* all belong to this type

2 The type in which the writer is not concerned primarily with the thought but with the sentiment. His essay is the expression of a mood, the fixing of an attitude that was, perhaps, temporary. It is a thing incomplete in itself, rendered significant and complete only by the feeling that inspired it.

Evidently the second is the more important type — the essay *par excellence*, the essay that is literature for its own sake. The tendency to-day is to disregard the first type altogether, to regard the essay as a purely personal matter to be treated by the writer as

he chooses. He may browse at will over his theme and say what he likes about it. His success depends on himself and not on any rules that may be prescribed for him.

He is moving in a world of his own : he alone recognises its importance. It is a world of personal experience and feeling. He projects himself into the world around him, he feels and observes ; he reflects, and his reflection transmutes his feeling and observation into words that express his response to it. If he is sincere, his words will illumine even a trifle. They will reveal to his readers the very inflection of his voice. His digressions, howsoever fantastic, his humour however preposterous, his learning however recondite, his pathos and his laughter even when forced, have all a significance if they are a revelation of his inmost self. His subjects perhaps trivial in themselves will assume an importance for us because he himself was so mightily concerned with them.

The prose of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries is full of such delightful self-revelations. Since Lamb set the fashion, one essayist after another has revealed a new world of thought and experience to us. They have added to our zest in life and letters not less successfully than the poets have done.

GOVERNMENT COLLEGE, LAHORE.

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M.G.S

laws had made such ample provision for their support. 'In every parish-house,' says he, 'the poor are supplied with food, clothes, fire, and a bed to lie on; they want no more: I desire no more myself; yet still they seem discontented. I am surprised at the inactivity of our magistrates, in not taking up such vagrants, who are only a weight upon the industrious. I am surprised that the people are found to relieve them, when they must be at the same time sensible that it, in some measure, encourages idleness, extravagance, and imposture. Were I to advise any man for whom I had the least regard, I would caution him by all means not to be imposed upon by their false pretences, let me assure you, sir, they are impostors, every one of them, and rather merit a prison than relief.'

He was proceeding in this strain, earnestly, to dissuade me from an imprudence of which I am seldom guilty, when an old man, who still had about him the remnants of tattered finery, implored our compassion. He assured us, that he was no common beggar, but forced into the shameful profession, to support a dying wife and five hungry children. Being prepossessed against such falsehoods, his story had not the least influence upon me; but it was quite otherwise with the man in black; I could see it visibly operate upon his countenance, and effectually interrupt his harangue. I could easily perceive, that his heart burned to relieve the five starving children, but he seemed ashamed to discover his weakness to me. While he thus hesitated between compassion and pride, I pretended to look another way, and he seized this opportunity of giving the poor petitioner a piece of silver, bidding him at the same time, in order that I should not hear, go work for his bread.

and not tease passengers with such impertinent falsehoods for the future.

As he had fancied himself quite unperceived, he continued, as we proceeded, to rail against beggars with as much animosity as before; he threw in some episodes on his own amazing prudence and economy, with his profound skill in discovering impostors; he explained the manner in which he would deal with beggars were he a magistrate, hinted at enlarging some of the prisons for their reception, and told two stories of ladies that were robbed by beggar-men. He was beginning a third to the same purpose, when a sailor with a wooden leg once more crossed our walks, desiring our pity, and blessing our limbs. I was for going on without taking any notice, but my friend, looking wistfully upon the poor petitioner, bid me stop, and he would show me with how much ease he could at any time detect an impostor.

He now, therefore, assumed a look of importance, and in an angry tone began to examine the sailor, demanding in what engagement he was thus disabled and rendered unfit for service. The sailor replied, in a tone as angrily as he, that he had been an officer on board a private ship of war, and that he had lost his leg abroad in defence of those who did nothing at home. At this reply, all my friend's importance vanished in a moment; he had not a single question more to ask; he now only studied what method he should take to relieve him unobserved. He had, however, no easy part to act, as he was obliged to preserve the appearance of ill-nature before me, and yet relieve himself by relieving the sailor. Casting, therefore, a furious look upon some bundles of chips which the fellow carried in a string at his back, my friend demanded how he sold his matches; but not



waiting for a reply, desuned, in a surly tone, to have a shilling's worth. The sailor seemed at first surprised at his demand, but soon recollected himself, and presenting his whole bundle, 'Here, master,' says he, 'take all my cargo, and a blessing into the bargain.'

It is impossible to describe with what an air of triumph my friend marched off with his new purchase, he assured me, that he was firmly of opinion that those fellows must have stolen their goods, who could thus afford to sell them for half their value. He informed me of several different uses to which those chips might be applied, he expatiated largely upon the savings that would result from lighting candles with a match instead of thrusting them into the fire. He averred, that he would as soon have parted with a tooth as his money to those vagabonds, unless for some valuable consideration. I cannot tell how long this panegyric upon frugality and matches might have continued, had not his attention been called off by another object more distressful than either of the former. A woman in rags, with one child in her arms and another on her back, was attempting to sing ballads, but with such a mournful voice, that it was difficult to determine whether she was singing or crying. A wretch who, in the deepest distress, still aimed at good-humour, was an object my friend was by no means capable of withstanding; his vivacity and his discourse were instantly interrupted; upon this occasion his very dissimulation had forsaken him. Even in my presence he immediately applied his hands to his pockets, in order to relieve her, but guess his confusion, when he found he had already given away all the money he carried about him to former objects! The misery painted in the woman's visage was not

half so strongly expressed as the agony in his. He continued to search for some time, but to no purpose, till, at length, recollecting himself with a face of ineffable good-nature, as he had no money, he put into her hands his shilling's worth of matches.

As there appeared something reluctantly good in the character of my companions, I must own it surprised me what could be his motives for thus concealing virtues which others take such pains to display. I was unable to repress my desire of knowing the history of a man who thus seemed to act under continual restraint, and whose benevolence was rather the effect of appetite than reason.

It was not, however, till after repeated solicitations he thought proper to gratify my curiosity. 'If you are fond,' says he, 'of hearing *hair-breadth-escapes*, my history must certainly please; for I have been for twenty years upon the very verge of starving, without ever being starved.

'My father, the younger son of a good family, was possessed of a small living in the church. His education was above his fortune, and his generosity greater than his education. Poor as he was, he had his flatterers still poorer than himself; for every dinner he gave them, they returned equivalent in praise; and this was all he wanted. The same ambition that actuates a monarch at the head of an army, influenced my father at the head of his table; he told the story of the ivy-tree, and that was laughed at: he repeated the jest of the two scholars and one pair of breeches and the company laughed at that; but the story of Taffy and the sedan-chair was sure to set the table in a roar. Thus his pleasure increased in proportion to the pleasure he gave; he loved all the world and he fancied all the world loved him.

As his fortune was but small, he lived up to the very extent of it he had no intention of leaving his children money, for that was dross; he was resolved they should have learning, for learning, he used to observe, was better than silver or gold. For this purpose he undertook to instruct us himself; and took as much pains to form our morals, as to improve our understanding. We were told that universal benevolence was what first cemented society: we were taught to consider all the wants of mankind as our own, to regard the *human face divine* with affection and esteem. he wound us up to be mere machines of pity, and rendered us incapable of withstanding the slightest impulse made either by real or fictitious distress. in a word, we were perfectly instructed in the arts of giving away thousands, before we were taught the more necessary qualifications of getting a farthing.

I cannot avoid imagining, that thus refined by his lessons out of all my suspicion and divested of even all the little cunning which nature had given me, I resembled, upon my first entrance into the busy and insidious world, one of those gladiators who were exposed without armour in the amphitheatre at Rome. My father, however who had only seen the world on one side, seemed to triumph in my superior discernment though my whole stock of wisdom consisted in being able to talk like himself upon subjects that once were useful, because they were then topics of the busy world. but that now were utterly useless because connected with the busy world no longer.

The first opportunity he had of finding his expectations disappointed, was at the very middling figure I made in the university, he had flattered himself that he should soon see me rising into the foremost

rank in literary reputation, but was mortified to find me utterly unnoticed and unknown. His disappointment might have been partly ascribed to his having over-rated my talents, and partly to my dislike of mathematical reasonings, at a time when my imagination and memory, yet unsatisfied, were more eager after new objects, than desirous of reasoning upon those I knew. This did not, however, please my tutors, who observed, indeed, that I was a little dull, but at the same time allowed, that I seemed to be

'After I had resided at college seven years, my very good-natured, and had no harm in me. father died, and left me—his blessing. Thus shoved from shore without ill-nature to protect, or cunning to guide, or proper stores to subsist me in so dangerous a voyage, I was obliged to embark in the wide world at twenty-two. But, in order to settle in life, my friends advised (for they always advise when they begin to despise us), they advised me, I say, to go into orders.

'To be obliged to wear a long wig, when I liked a short one, or a black coat, when I generally dressed in brown, I thought was such a restraint upon my liberty, that I absolutely rejected the proposal. A priest in England is not the same mortified creature with a bonze in China! With us, not he that fasts best, but eats best, is reckoned the best liver; yet I rejected a life of luxury, indolence, and ease, from no other consideration but that boyish one of dress. So that my friends were now perfectly satisfied I was undone; and yet they thought it a pity for one who had not the least harm in him, and was so very good-natured.

'Poverty naturally begets dependence, and I was admitted as flatterer to a great man. At first I was

surprised that the situation of a flatterer at a great man's table could be thought disagreeable; there was no great trouble in listening attentively when his lordship spoke, and laughing when he looked round for applause. Thus even good manners might have obliged me to perform. I found, however, too soon, that his lordship was a greater dunce than myself, and from that very moment flattery was at an end. I now rather aimed at setting him right, than at receiving his absurdities with submission. To flatter those we do not know is an easy task, but to flatter our intimate acquaintances, all whose foibles are strongly in our eyes, is drudgery insupportable. Every time I now opened my lips in praise my falsehood went to my conscience, his lordship soon perceived me to be very unfit for service. I was, therefore, discharged; my patron at the same time being graciously pleased to observe, that he believed I was tolerably good-natured and had not the least harm in me.

'Disappointed in ambition, I had recourse to love. A young lady, who lived with her aunt, and was possessed of a pretty fortune in her own disposal, had given me, as I fancied, some reason to expect success. The symptoms by which I was guided were striking. She had always laughed with me at her awkward acquaintance, and at her aunt among the number, she always observed, that a man of sense would make a better husband than a fool, and as I constantly applied the observation in my own favour, she continually talked, in my company, of friendship and the beauties of the mind, and spoke of Mr Shrimp, my rival's high-heeled shoes, with detestation. These were circumstances which I thought strongly in my favour, so, after resolving and re-resolving, I had courage enough to tell her my mind. Miss heard my

proposals with serenity, seeming at the same time to study the figures of her fan. Out at last it came. There was but one small objection to complete our happiness; which was no more, than—that she was married three months before to Mr. Shrimp, with high-heeled shoes! By way of consolation, however, she observed, that though I was disappointed in her, my addresses to her aunt would probably kindle her into sensibility; as the old lady always allowed me to be very good-natured, and not to have the least share of harm in me.

‘ Yet still I had friends, numerous friends, and to them I was resolved to apply. O friendship! thou fond soother of the human breast, to thee we fly in every calamity; to thee the wretched seek for succour; on thee the care-tired son of misery fondly relies; from thy kind assistance the unfortunate always hope for relief, and may be ever sure of—disappointment! My first application was to a city scrivener, who had frequently offered to lend me money when he knew I did not want it. I informed him that now was the time to put his friendship to the test, that I wanted to borrow a couple of hundreds for a certain occasion, and was resolved to take it up from him. “ And pray, sir,” cried my friend, “ do you want all this money ”? —“ Indeed I never wanted it more,” returned I. “ I am sorry for that,” cries the scrivener, “ with all my heart; for they who want money when they come to borrow, will always want money when they should come to pay.”

‘ From him I flew with indignation to one of the best friends I had in the world, and made the same request. “ Indeed, Mr. Dry-bone ” cries my friend, “ I always thought it would come to this. You know, sir, I would not advise you but for your own

good; but your conduct has hitherto been ridiculous in the highest degree, and some of your acquaintance always thought you a very silly fellow. Let me see, you want two hundred pounds. Do you only want two hundred, sir, exactly?" "To confess a truth," returned I, "I shall want three hundred; but then I have another friend from whom I can borrow the rest"—"Why then," replied my friend, "If you would take my advice (and you know I should not presume to advise you but for your own good), I would recommend it to you to borrow the whole sum from that other friend, and then one note will serve for all, you know."

'Poverty now began to come fast upon me; yet instead of growing more provident and cautious as I grew poor, I became every day more indolent and simple. A friend was arrested for fifty pounds; I was unable to extricate him except by becoming his bail when at liberty he fled from his creditors, and left me to take his place. In prison I expected greater satisfaction than I had enjoyed at large. I hope to converse with men in this new world simple and believing like myself; but I found them as cunning and as cautious as those in the world I had left behind. They spunged up my money whilst it lasted, borrowed my coats and never paid for them, and cheated me when I played at cribbage. All this was done because they believed me to be very good-natured, and knew that I had no harm in me.

'Upon my first entrance into this mansion, which is to some the abode of despair, I felt no sensations different from those I experienced abroad. I was now on one side the door, and those who were unconfined were on the other; this was all the difference between us. At first, indeed, I felt some uneasiness, in

considering how I should be able to provide this week for the wants of the week ensuing ; but after some time, if I found myself sure of eating one day, I never troubled my head how I was to be supplied another. I seized every precarious meal with the utmost good-humour ; indulged no rants of spleen at my situation ; never called down heaven and all the stars to behold me dining upon a half-penny worth of radishes ; my very companions were taught to believe that I liked salad better than mutton I contented myself with thinking, that all my life I should either eat white bread or brown ; considered that all that happened was best ; laughed when I was not in pain, took the world as it went, and read Tacitus often, for want of more books and company.

' How long I might have continued in this torpid state of simplicity I cannot tell, had I not been roused by seeing an old acquaintance, whom I knew to be a prudent blockhead, preferred to a place in the government I now found that I had pursued a wrong track, and that the true way of being able to relieve others, was first to aim at independence myself ; my immediate care, therefore, was to leave my present habitation, and make an entire reformation in my conduct and behaviour For a free, open, undesigning deportment, I put on that of closeness, prudence, and economy. One of the most heroic actions I ever performed, and for which I shall praise myself as long as I live, was the refusing half-a-crown to an old acquaintance, at the time when he wanted it, and I had it to spare ; for this alone I deserve to be decreed an ovation.

' I now, therefore, pursued a course of uninterrupted frugality, seldom wanted a dinner, and was, consequently, invited to twenty I soon began to get



the character of a saving hunk that had money, and insensibly grew into esteem. Neighbours have asked my advice in the disposal of their daughters, and I have always taken care not to give any. I have contracted a friendship with an alderman, only by observing, that if we take a farthing from a thousand pounds, it will be a thousand pounds no longer. I have been invited to a pawnbroker's table, by pretending to hate gravy, and am now actually upon treaty of marriage with a rich widow, for only having observed that the bread was rising. If ever I am asked a question, whether I know it or not, instead of answering, I only smile and look wise. If a charity is proposed, I go about with the hat, but put nothing in myself. If a wretch solicits my pity, I observe that the world is filled with impostors, and take a certain method of not being deceived, by never relieving. In short, I now find the truest way of finding esteem even from the indigent, is *to give away nothing, and thus have much in our power to give*."

## ON GOING A JOURNEY.

WILLIAM HAZLITT.

ONE of the pleasantest things in the world is going a journey; but I like to go by myself. I can enjoy society in a room; but out-of-doors, nature is company enough for me. I am then never less alone than when alone.

'The fields his study, nature was his book.'

I cannot see the wit of walking and talking at the same time. When I am in the country, I wish, to vegetate like the country. I am not for criticising hedge-rows and black cattle. I go out of town in order to forget the town and all that is in it. There are those who for this purpose go to watering-places, and carry the metropolis with them. I like more elbow-room, and fewer encumbrances. I like solitude, when I give myself up to it, for the sake of solitude, nor do I ask for

'a friend in my retreat,  
Whom I may whisper solitude is sweet.'

*The soul of a journey is liberty, perfect liberty, to think, feel, do just as one pleases* We go a journey chiefly to be free of all impediments and of all inconveniences; to leave ourselves behind, much more to get rid of others. It is because I want a little breathing-space to muse on indifferent matters, where Contemplation

'May plume her feathers and let grow her wings  
That in the various bustle of resort  
Were all too ruffled, and sometimes impair'd.'

that I absent myself from the town for awhile, without feeling at a loss the moment I am left by myself. Instead of a friend in a post-chaise or in a tilbury, to exchange good things with, and vary the same stale topics over again, for once let me have a truce with impertinence. Give me the clear blue sky over my head, and the green turf beneath my feet, a winding road before me, and a three hour's march to dinner—and then to thinking! It is hard if I cannot start some game on these lone heaths. *I laugh, I run, I leap, I sing for joy*. From the point of yonder rolling cloud I plunge into my past being, and revel there, as the sun-burnt Indian plunges headlong into the wave that wafts him to his native shore. Then long-forgotten things, like 'sunken wrack and sumless treasures,' burst upon my eager sight, and I begin to feel, think, and be myself again. Instead of an awkward silence, broken by attempts at wit or dull common-places, mine is that undisturbed silence of the heart which alone is perfect eloquence. No one likes puns alliterations antitheses, argument, and analysis better than I do, but I sometimes had rather be without them. 'Leave, oh, leave me to my repose!' I have just now other business in hand, which would seem idle to you, but is with me 'very stuff of the conscience'. Is not this wild rose sweet without a comment? Does not this daisy leap to my heart set in its coat of emerald? Yet if I were to explain to you the circumstance that has so endeared it to me, you would only smile. Had I not better then keep it to myself, and let it serve me to brood over, from here to yonder craggy point, and from thence onward to the far-distant horizon? *I should be but bad company all that way, and therefore prefer being alone*. I have heard it said that you may, when the moody

fit comes on, walk or ride on by yourself, and indulge your reveries. But this looks like a breach of manners, a neglect of others, and you are thinking all the time that you ought to rejoin your party. 'Out upon such half-faced fellowship,' say I. I like to be either entirely to myself, or entirely at the disposal of others; to talk or be silent, to walk or sit still, to be sociable or solitary. I was pleased with an observation of Mr. Cobbett's, that 'he thought it a bad French custom to drink our wine with our meals, and that an Englishman ought to do only one thing at a time.' So I cannot talk and think, or indulge in melancholy musing and lively conversation by fits and starts. 'Let me have a companion of my way,' says Sterne, 'were it but to remark how the shadows lengthen as the sun declines' It is beautifully said. but in my opinion, this continual comparing of notes interferes with the involuntary impression of things upon the mind, and hurts the sentiment. If you only hint what you feel in a kind of dumb show, it is insipid. if you have to explain it, it is making a toil of a pleasure. You cannot read the book of nature without being perpetually put to the trouble of translating it for the benefit of others. *I am for the synthetical method on a journey, in preference to the analytical.* I am content to lay in a stock of ideas then, and to examine and anatomize them afterwards. I want to see my vague notions float like the down of the thistle before the breeze, and not to have them entangled in the briers and thorns of controversy. For once I like to have it all my own way; and this is impossible unless you are alone, or in such company as I do not covet. I have no objection to argue a point with anyone for twenty miles of measured road, but not for pleasure. If you remark

the scent of a bean-field crossing the road, perhaps your fellow-traveller has no smell. If you point to a distant object, perhaps he is short-sighted, and has to take out his glass to look at it. There is a feeling in the air, a tone in the colour of a cloud, which hits your fancy, but the effect of which you are unable to account for. There is then no sympathy, but an uneasy craving after it, and a dissatisfaction which pursues you on the way, and in the end probably produces ill-humour. Now I never quarrel with myself, and take all my own conclusions for granted till I find it necessary to defend them against objections. It is not merely that you may not be of accord on the objects and circumstances that present themselves before you—these may recall a number of objects, and lead to associations too delicate and refined to be possibly communicated to others. Yet these I love to cherish, and sometimes still fondly clutch them, when I can escape from the throng to do so. To give way to our feelings before company seems extravagance or affectation; and, on the other hand, to have to unravel this mystery of our being at every turn, and to make others take an equal interest in it (otherwise the end is not answered) is a task to which few are competent. We must 'give it an understanding, but no tongue.' My old friend Coleridge, however, could do both. He could go on in the most delightful explanatory way over hill and dale, a summer's day, and convert a landscape into a didactic poem or a Pindaric ode. 'He talked far above singing.' If I could so clothe my ideas in sounding and flowing words, I might perhaps wish to have someone with me to admire the swelling theme; or I could be more content, were it possible for me still to hear his echoing voice in the woods of All-Foxden. They had 'that

fine madness in them which our first poets had; and if they could have been caught by some rare instrument, would have breathed such strains as the following :—

‘ Here be woods as green  
As any, air likewise as fresh and sweet  
As when smooth Zephyrus plays on the fleet  
Flee of the curl’d stream, with flows as many  
As the young spring gives, and as choice as any :  
Here be all new delights, cool streams and wells,  
Arbours overgrown with woodbine, caves and dells;  
Cresses were there seld, while I sit by and sing.  
Or rather rush to make many a ring  
For the long fingers; tell thee tales of love,  
How the pale Plooebe, hunting in a grove,  
First saw the lay Eudymon, from whose eyes  
She took abroad fire that never dies;  
How she convey’d him softly in a sleep,  
His temples bound with pppys, to the steep  
Head of old Latmos, where she sleeps each night,  
Gilding the mountain with her brother’s light,  
To live her sweetest — faithful Shepherdess.

Had I words and images at command like these, I would attempt to wake the thoughts that he slumbering on golden ridges in the evening clouds, but at the sight of nature my fancy, poor as it is, droops and closes up at leaves, like flowers at sunset. I can make nothing out at the spot; I must have time to collect myself.

In general a good thing speaks out-of-door prospects: it should be reserved for Table-talk. Lamb is for this reason, I take it, the worst company in the world out-of-door; because he is the best within. I grant there is one subject on which it is pleasant to talk on a journey, and that is what one shall have for supper when we get to our inn at night. The open air improves this sort of conversation or friendly altercation, by setting a keener edge on appetite. Every

mile of the road heightens the flavour of the viands we expect at the end of it. How fine it is to enter some old town, walled and turreted, just at the approach of night-fall, or to come to some straggling village, with the lights streaming through the surrounding gloom, and then, after enquiring for the best entertainment that the place affords, to 'take one's ease at one's inn!' These eventful moments in our lives' history are too precious, too full of solid, heart-felt happiness to be frittered and dribbled away in imperfect sympathy. I would have them all to myself, and drain them to the last drop—they will do to talk of or to write about afterwards. What a delicate speculation it is, after drinking whole goblets of tea,

'The cups that cheer but not inebriate,'

and letting the fumes ascend into the brain, to sit considering what we shall have for supper—eggs and aasher, a rabbit smothered in onions, or an excellent veal cutlet! Sancho in such a situation once fixed upon cow-heel, and his choice, though he could not help it, is not to be disparaged. Then, in the intervals of pictured scenery and Shandean contemplation, to catch the preparation and the stir in the kitchen—*Procul, O procul, este profani!* These hours are sacred to silence and to musing, to be treasured up in the memory, and to feed the source of smiling thoughts hereafter. I would not waste them in idle talk; or if I must have the integrity of fancy broken in upon, I would rather it were by a stranger than a friend. A stranger takes his hue and character from the time and place; he is a part of the furniture and costume of an inn. If he is a Quaker, or from the West Riding of Yorkshire, so much the better. I do not even try to sympathize with him, and he breaks no squares. I associate nothing with my travelling

companion but present objects and passing events *In his ignorance of me and my affairs, I in a manner forget myself.* But a friend reminds one of other things, rips up old grievances, and destroys the abstraction of the scene. He comes in ungraciously between us and our imaginary character. Something is dropped in the course of conversation that gives a hint of your profession and pursuits; or from having someone with you that knows the less sublime portions of your history, it seems that other people do. You are no longer a citizen of the world but your 'unhoused free condition is put into circumscription and confine.' The *incognito* of an inn is one of its striking privileges—'lord of one's-self, uncumber'd with a name.' Oh! it is great to shake off the trammels of the world and of public opinion—to lose our importunate, tormenting, ever-lasting personal identity in the elements of nature, and become the creature of the moment, clear of all ties—to hold to the universe only by a dish of sweet-breads, and to owe nothing but the score of the evening—and no longer seeking for applause and meeting with contempt, to be known by no other title than *the Gentleman in the parlour!* One may take one's choice of all characters in this romantic state of uncertainty as to one's real pretensions, and become indefinitely respectable and negatively right-worshipful. We baffle prejudice and disappoint conjecture; and from being so to others, begin to be objects of curiosity and wonder even to ourselves. We are no more those hackneyed common-places that we appear in the world an inn restores us to the level of nature, and quits scores with society! I have certainly spent some enviable hours at inns—sometimes when I have been left entirely to myself, and have tried to solve some metaphysical problem, as



once at Witham-common, where I found out the proof that likeness is not a case of the association of ideas—at other times, when there have been pictures in the room, as at St Neot's (I think it was), where I first met with Gribelin's engravings of the Cartoons, into which I entered at once, and at a little inn on the borders of Wales, where there happened to be hanging some of Westall's drawings, which I compared triumphantly (for a theory that I had, not for the admired artist) with the figure of a girl who had ferried me over the Severn, standing up in the boat between me and the twilight—at other times I might mention, luxuriating in books, with a peculiar interest in this way, as I remember sitting up half the night to read *Paul and Virginia*, which I picked up at an inn at Bridge-water, after being drenched in the rain all day, and at the same place I got through two volumes of Madame D'Ablav's *Camilla*. It was on the 10th of April, 1798 that I sat down to a volume of the *Neve Eloise*, at the inn at Llangollen, over a bottle of sherry and a cold chicken. The letter I chose was that in which St Preux describes his feelings as he first caught a glimpse from the heights of the Jura of the Pays de Vaud, and which I had brought with me as a *bonne bouche* to crown the evening with. It was my birthday, and I had for the first time come from a place in the neighbourhood to visit this delightful spot. The road to Llangollen turns off between Chirk and Wrexham, and on passing a certain point, you come all at once upon the valley, which opens like an amphitheatre, broad, barren hills rising in majestic state on either side with 'green upland swells that echo to the bleat of flocks' below, and the river Dee babbling over its stony bed in the midst of them. The valley at this time 'glittered green with sunny showers',

mind revives again; but we forget those that we have just left. *It seems that we can think but of one place at a time.* The canvas of the fancy is but of a certain extent, and if we paint one set of objects upon it, they immediately efface every other. We cannot enlarge our conceptions, we only shift our point of view. The landscape bares its bosom to the enraptured eye, we take our fill of it, and seem as if we could form no other image of beauty or grandeur. We pass on, and think no more of it: the horizon that shuts it from our sight also blots it from our memory like a dream. In travelling through a wild barren country, I can form no idea of a woody and cultivated one. It appears to me that all the world must be barren, like what I see of it. In the country we forget the town, and in town we despise the country. 'Beyond Hyde Park' says Su Fopling Flutter, 'all is a desert.' All that part of the map that we do not see before us is a blank. The world, in our conceit of it, is not much bigger than a nut-shell. It is not one prospect expanded into another, county joined to county, kingdom to kingdom, lauds to seas, making an image voluminous and vast;—the mind can form no larger idea of space than the eye can take in at a single glance. The rest is a name written in a map, a calculation of arithmetic. For instance, what is the true signification of that immense mass of territory and population known by the name of China, to us? An inch of paste-board on a wooden globe, of no more account than a China orange! Things near us are seen of the size of life: things at a distance are diminished to the size of the understanding. *We measure the universe by ourselves and even comprehend the texture of our own being only piece-meal.* In this way, however, we remember an infinity of things and

places. The mind is like a mechanical instrument that plays a great variety of tunes, but it must play them in succession. One idea recalls another, but it at the same time excludes all others. In trying to renew old recollections, we cannot as it were unfold the whole web of our existence; we must pick out the single threads. So in coming to a place where we have formerly lived, and with which we have intimate associations, everyone must have found that the feeling grows more vivid the nearer we approach the spot, from the mere anticipation of the actual impression: we remember circumstances, feelings, persons, faces, names, that we had not thought of for years; but for the time all the rest of the world is forgotten!—To return to the question I have quitted above.

I have no objection to go to see ruins, aqueducts, pictures, in company with a friend or a party, but rather the contrary, for the former reason reversed. They are intelligible matters, and will bear talking about. The sentiment here is not tacit, but communicable and overt. Salisbury Plain is barren of criticism, but Stonehenge will bear a discussion antiquarian, picturesque, and philosophical. In setting out on a party of pleasure, the first consideration always is where we shall go to in taking a solitary ramble, the question is what we shall meet with by the way. 'The mind is its own place'; nor are we anxious to arrive at the end of our journey. I can myself do the honours indifferently well to works of art and curiosity. I once took a party to Oxford with no mean *éclat*—showed them that seat of the Muses at a distance,

'With glistening spires and pinnacles adorn'd'—  
descanted on the learned air that breathes from the

grassy quadrangles and stone walls of halls and colleges—was at home in the Bodleian; and at Blenheim quite superceded the powdered Cicero that attended us, and that pointed in vain with his wand to commonplace beauties in matchless pictures—As another exception to the above reasoning, I should not feel confident in venturing on a journey in a foreign country without a companion. I should want at intervals to hear the sound of my own language. There is an involuntary antipathy in the mind of an Englishman to foreign manners and notions that requires the assistance of social sympathy to carry it off. As the distance from home increases, this relief, which was at first a luxury, becomes a passion and an appetite. A person would almost feel stifled to find himself in the deserts of Arabia without friends and countrymen. There must be allowed to be something in the view of Athens or old Rome that claims the utterance of speech; and I own that the Pyramids are too mighty for any single contemplation. In such situations, so opposite to all one's ordinary train of ideas, one seems a species by one's-self, a limb torn off from society, unless one can meet with instant fellowship and support.—Yet I did not feel this want or craving very pressing once, when I first set my foot on the laughing shores of France. Calais was peopled with novelty and delight. The confused, busy murmur of the place was like oil and wine poured into my ears, nor did the mariners' hymn, which was sung from the top of an old crazy vessel in the harbour, as the sun went down, send an alien sound into my soul. I only breathed the air of general humanity. I walked over 'the vine-covered hills and gay regions of France,' erect and satisfied, for the image of man was not cast down and chained to the foot of arbitrary thrones. I was at no loss for

## CHRIST'S HOSPITAL FIVE-AND-THIRTY YEARS AGO

CHARLES LAMB

**I**N Mr. Lamb's *Works* published a year or two since, I find a magnificent eulogy on my old school,\* such as it was, or may appear to him to have been, between the year 1782 and 1789. It happens, very oddly, that my own stopping at Christ's was nearly corresponding with his; and, with all gratitude to him for his enthusiasm for the cloisters, I think he has contrived to bring together whatever can be said in praise of them, dropping all the other side of the argument most ingeniously.

I remember it at school; and can well recollect that he had some peculiar advantages, which I and others of his schoolfellows had not. His friends lived in town, and were near at hand, and he had the privilege of going to see them, almost as often as he wished through some invidious distinction, which was denied to us. The present worthy sub-treasurer to the Inner Temple can explain how that happened. He had his tea and hot rolls in a morning, while we were battenning upon our quarter of a penny loaf—our *crug*—moistened with attenuated small beer in wooden piggings, smacking of the pitched leathern jack it was poured from. Our Monday's milk porridge, blue and tasteless, and the pease soup of Saturday, coarse and choking, were enriched for him with a slice of 'extraordinary bread and butter,' from the hot-loaf of the Temple. The

\* Recollections of Christ's Hospital

often, though I thought them few enough; and, one after another, they all failed me, and I felt myself alone among six hundred playmates

O the cruelty of separating a poor lad from his early homestead! The yearnings which I used to have towards it in those unfledged years. How, in my dreams, would my native town (far in the west) come back, with its church, and trees, and faces! How I would wake weeping and in the anguish of my heart exclaim upon sweet Calne in Wiltshire!

To this late hour of my life, I trace impressions left by the recollection of those friendless holidays. The long warm days of summer never return but they bring with them a gloom from the haunting memory of those *whole-day leaves*, when, by some strange arrangement, we were turned out for the live-long day, upon our own hands, whether we had friends to go to or none. I remember those bathing-excursions to the New-River which L. recalls with such relish, better, I think, than he can—for he was a home-seeking lad, and did not much care for such water-pastimes—How merrily we would sallv forth into the fields, and strip under the first warmth of the sun, and wanton like young dace in the streams, getting us appetites for noon, which those of us that were penniless (our scanty morning crust long since exhausted) had not the means of allaying—while the cattle, and the birds, and the fishes, were at feed about us and we had nothing to satisfy our cravings—the very beauty of the day, and the exercise of the pastime, and the sense of liberty, setting a keener edge upon them!—How faint and languid, finally, we would return, towards night-fall, to our desired morsel, half-rejoicing, half-reluctant, that the hours of our uneasy liberty had expired!

might be the planter of that name, who suffered—at Nevis, I think, or St Kitts,—some few years since? My friend Tobin was the benevolent instrument of bringing him to the gallows.) This petty Nero actually branded a boy, who had offended him, with a red-hot iron, and nearly starved forty of us with exacting contributions, to the one half of our bread, to pamper a young ass, which, incredible as it may seem, with the connivance of the nurse's daughter (a young flame of his), he had contrived to smuggle in and keep upon the leads of the ward as they called our dormitories. This game went on for better than a week, till the foolish beast, not able to fare well but he must cry roast meat—happier than Caligula's minion, could he have kept his own counsel—but, foolisher, alas! than any of his species in the fables—waxing fat, and kicking, in the fulness of bread, one unlucky minute would needs proclaim his good fortune to the world below and, laying out his simple throat, blew such a ram's horn blast, as (toppling down the walls of his own Jericho) set concealment any longer at defiance. The client was dismissed, with certain attentions, to Smithfield; but I never understood that the patron underwent any censure on the occasion. This was in the stewardship of L's admired Perry.

Under the same *facile* administration, can L. have forgotten the cool impunity with which the nurses used to carry away openly, in open platters, for their own tables, one out of two of every hot joint, which the careful matron had been seeing scrupulously weighed out for our dinners? These things were daily practised in that magnificent apartment, which L. (grown connoisseur since we presume) praises so highly for the grand paintings 'by Verrio and others,' with which it is 'hung round and adorned.' But the

sight of sleek well-fed bluecoat boys in pictures was, at that time, I believe, little consolatory to him, or us, the living ones, who saw the better part of our provisions carried away before our faces by harpies; and ourselves reduced (with the Trojan in the hall of Dido)

To feed our mind with idle portraiture.

L. has recorded the repugnance of the school to *gags*, or the fat of fresh beef boiled; and sets it down to some superstition. But these unctuous morsels are never grateful to young palates (children are universally fat-haters), and in strong, coarse, boiled meats, *unsalted*, are detestable. A *gag-cater* in our time was equivalent to a *ghoul*, and held in equal detestation—suffered under the imputation

‘Twas said  
He ate strange flesh’

He was observed, after dinner, carefully to gather up the remnants left at his table (not many, nor very choice fragments you may credit me)—and, in an especial manner, these disreputable morsels, which he would convey away, and secretly stow in the settle that stood at his bedside. None saw when he ate them. It was rumoured that he privately devoured them in the night. He was watched, but no traces of such midnight practices were discoverable. Some reported that, on leave-days, he had been seen to carry out of the bounds a large blue check handkerchief, full of something. This then must be the accursed thing. Conjecture next was at work to imagine how he could dispose of it. Some said he sold it to the beggars. This belief generally prevailed. He went about moping. None spake to him. No one would play with him. He was excommunicated; put out of the



all calculated to conciliate hostile prejudices. I have since seen him carrying a baker's basket. I think I heard he did not do quite so well by himself, as he had done by the old folks.

I was a hypochondriac lad; and the sight of a boy in fetters, upon the day of my first putting on the blue clothes, was not exactly fitted to assuage the natural terrors of initiation. I was of tender years, barely turned of seven; and had only read of such things in books, or seen them but in dreams. I was told he had *run away*. This was punishment for the first offence.—As a novice I was soon after taken to see the dungeons. These were little, square Bedlam cells, where a boy could just lie at his length upon straw and a blanket—a mattress, I think, was afterwards substituted—with a peep of light, let in askance, from a prison orifice at top, barely enough to read by. Here the poor boy was locked in by himself all day, without sight of any but the porter who brought him his bread and water—who *might not speak to him*,—or of the beadle, who came twice a week to call him out to receive his periodical chastisement, which came almost welcome, because it separated him for a brief interval from solitude:—and here he was shut up by himself *of nights* out of the reach of any sound, to suffer whatever horrors the weak nerves and superstition incident to his time of life might subject him to.<sup>1</sup> This was the penalty for the second offence. Wouldst thou like, reader, to see what became of him in the next degree?

<sup>1</sup> One or two instances of lunacy, or attempted suicide, accordingly, at length convinced the governors of the impolicy of this part of the sentence, and the midnight torture to the spirits was dispensed with.—This fancy of dungeons for children was a sprout of Howard's brain; for which (saying the reverence due to Holy Paul) methinks, I could willingly spit upon his statue.

The culprit, who had been a third time an offender, and whose expulsion was at this time deemed irrevocable, was brought forth, as at some solemn *auto da fé*, arrayed in uncouth and most appalling attire—all trace of his late “watchet weeds” carefully effaced, he was exposed in a jacket resembling those which London lamplighters formerly delighted in. with a cap of the same. The effect of this divestiture was such as the ingenious devisers of it could have anticipated. With his pale and frightened features, it was as if some of those disfigurements in Dante had seized upon him. In this disguise he was brought into the hall (L’s favourite state-room), where awaited him the whole number of his school-fellows, whose joint lessons and sports he was henceforth to share no more; the awful presence of the steward, to be seen for the last time; of the executioner beadle, clad in his state robe for the occasion; and of two faces more, of dire import, because never but in these extremities visible. These were governors—two of whom by choice, or charter, were always accustomed to officiate at these *Ultima Supplicia*; not to mitigate (so at least we understood it), but to enforce the uttermost stripe. Old Bamber Gascoigne, and Peter Aubert, I remember were colleagues on one occasion, when the beadle turning rather pale, a glass of brandy was ordered to prepare him for the mysteries. The scourging was, after the old Roman fashion, long and stately. The lictor accompanied the criminal quite round the hall. We were generally too faint with attending to the previous disgusting circumstances, to make accurate report with our eyes of the degree of corporal suffering inflicted. Report, of course, gave out the back knotty and livid. After scourging, he was made over, in his *San Benito*, to his friends, if he had any (but commonly such poor

runagates were friendless), or to his parish officer, who, to enhance the effect of the scene, had his station allotted to him on the outside of the hall-gate.

These solemn pageantries were not played off so often as to spoil the general mirth of the community. We had plenty of exercise and recreation *after* school hours; and, for myself, I must confess, that I was never happier, than in them. The Upper and the Lower Grammar Schools were held in the same room; and an imaginary line only divided their bounds. Their character was as different as that of the inhabitants on the two sides of the Pyrenees. The Rev. James Boyer was the Upper Master; but the Rev. Matthew Field presided over that portion of the apartment of which I had the good fortune to be a member. We lived a life as careless as birds. We talked and did just what we pleased, and nobody molested us. We carried an accidence, or a grammar, for form, but, for any trouble it gave us, we might take two years in getting through the verbs deponent, and another two in forgetting all that we had learned about them. There was now and then the formality of saying a lesson, but if you had not learned it, a brush across the shoulders (just enough to disturb a fly) was the sole remonstrance. Field never used the rod; and in truth he wielded the cane with no great good will—holding it 'like a dancer.' It looked in his hands rather like an emblem than an instrument of authority; and an emblem, too, he was ashamed of. He was a good easy man, that did not care to ruffle his own peace, nor perhaps set any great consideration upon the value of juvenile time. He came among us, now and then, but often staved away whole days from us; and when he came it made no difference to us—he had his private room to retire to, the short time he stayed, to be out of the sound of

our noise. Our mirth and uproar went on. We had classics of our own, without being beholden to "insolent Greece or haughty Rome," that passed current amongst us—"Peter Wilkins"—"The Adventures of the Hon. Captain Robert Boyle"—"The Fortunate Blue Coat Boy"—and the like. Or we cultivated a turn for mechanic and scientific operations; making little sun-dials of paper; or weaving those ingenious parentheses called *cat-cradles*; or making dry peas to dance upon the end of a tin-pipe, or studying the art military over that laudable game 'French and English,' and a hundred other such devices to pass away the time—mixing the useful with the agreeable—as would have made the souls of Rousseau and John Locke chuckle to have seen us.

Matthew Field belonged to that class of modest divines who affect to mix in equal proportion the *gentleman*, the *scholar*, and the *Christian*; but, I know not how, the first ingredient is generally found to be the predominating dose in the composition. He was engaged in gay parties, or with his courtly bow at some episcopal levee, when he should have been attending upon us. He had for many years the classical charge of a hundred children, during the four or five years of their education; and his very highest form seldom proceeded further than two or three of the introductory fables of Phædrus. How things were suffered to go on thus, I cannot guess. Boyer, who was the proper person to have remedied these abuses always affected, perhaps felt, a delicacy in interfering in a province not strictly his own. I have not been without my suspicions, that he was not altogether displeased at the contrast we presented to his end of the school. We were a sort of Helots to his young Spartans. He would sometimes, with ironic deference

send to borrow a rod of the Under-Master, and then, with sardonic grin, observe to one of his upper boys 'how neat and fresh the twigs looked.' While his pale students were battering their brains over Xenophon and Plato, with a silence as deep as that enjoyed by the Samite, we were enjoying ourselves at our ease in our little Goshen. We saw a little into the secrets of his discipline, and the prospect did but the more reconcile us to our lot. His thunders rolled innocuous for us his storms came near, but never touched us, contrary to Gideon's miracle, while all around were drenched, our fleece was dry.<sup>1</sup> His boys turned out the better scholars; we, I suspect, have the advantage in temper. His pupils cannot speak of him without something of terror allaying their gratitude; the remembrance of Field comes back with all the soothing images of indolence, and summer slumbers, and work like play, and innocent idleness, and Elysian exemptions, and life itself a 'playing holiday.'

Though sufficiently removed from the jurisdiction of Boyer, we were near enough (as I have said) to understand a little of his system. We occasionally heard sounds of the *Ululantes*, and caught glances of Tartarus. B was a rabid pedant. His English style was cramped to barbarism. His Easter anthems (for his duty obliged him to those periodical flights) were grating as scannell pipes.<sup>2</sup>—He would laugh, ay, and

<sup>1</sup> Cowley

<sup>2</sup> In this and everything B. was the antipodes of his condjutor. While the former was digging his brains for crude anthems, worth a pig-nut, F would be recreating his gentlemanly fancy in the more flowery walks of the Muses. A little dramatic effusion of his, under the name of Vertumnus and Pomona, is not yet forgotten by the chroniclers of that sort of literature. It was accepted by Garrick, but the town did not give it their sanction—B used to say of it, in a way of half-compliment, half-irony, that it was *too classical for representation*.

heartily, but then it must be at Flaccus's quibble about *Rex* — or at the *tristis severitas in vultu*, or *inspicere in patinas*, of Terence—thin jests, which at their first broaching could hardly have had *vis* enough to move a Roman muscle. He had two wigs, both pedantic, but of different omen. The one serene, smiling, fresh powdered, betokening a mild day. The other, an old, discoloured, unkempt, angry caxon, denoting frequent and bloody execution. Woe to the school, when he made his morning appearance in his *passy*, or *passionate wig*. No comet expounded surer. J. B. had a heavy hand. I have known him double his fist at a poor trembling child (the maternal milk hardly dry upon its lips) with a 'Sirrah, do you presume to set your wits at me?'—Nothing was more common than to see him make a headlong entry into the schoolroom, from his inner recess or library, and, with turbulent eye, singling out a lad, roar out, 'Od's my life, sirrah' (his favourite adjuration), 'I have a great mind to whip you,'—then, with as sudden a retracing impulse, fling back into his lair—and, after a cooling lapse of some minutes (during which all but the culprit had totally forgotten the context) drive headlong out again, piecing out his imperfect sense, as if it had been some Devil's Litany, with the expletory yell—'and I WILL, too.'—In his gentler moods, when the *rabidus furor* was assuaged, he had resort to an ingenious method, peculiar, for what I have heard, to himself, of whipping the boy, and reading the Debates, at the same time, a paragraph and a lash between; which in those times, when parliamentary oratory was most at a height and flourishing in these realms, was not calculated to impress the patient with a veneration for the diffuser graces of rhetoric.

Once, and but once, the uplifted rod was known to fall ineffectual from his hand — when droll squinting W., having been caught putting the inside of the master's desk to a use for which the architect had clearly not designed it, to justify himself, with great simplicity averred, that *he did not know that the thing had been forewarned*. This exquisite irrecognition of any law antecedent to the *oral* or *declaratory*, struck so irresistibly upon the fancy of all who heard it (the pedagogue himself not excepted) that remission was unavoidable.

L has given credit to B.'s great merits as an instructor. Coleridge, in his literary life, has pronounced a more intelligible and ample encomium on them. The author of the *Country Spectator* doubts not to compare him with the ablest teachers of antiquity. Perhaps we cannot dismiss him better than with the pious ejaculation of C—— when he heard that his old master was on his death-bed: 'Poor J. B !—may all his faults be forgiven; and may he be wafted to bliss by cherub boys all head and wings, with no *bottoms* to reproach his sublunary infirmities.'

Under him were many good and sound scholars bred.—First Grecian of my time was Lancelot Pepys Stevens, kindest of boys and men, since Co-grammar-master (and inseparable companion) with Dr T——e. What an edifying spectacle did this brace of friends present to those who remembered the anti-socialities of their predecessors!—you never met the one by chance in the street without a wonder, which was quickly dissipated by the almost immediate sub-appearance of the other. Generally arm-in-arm, these kindly coadjutors lightened for each other the toilsome duties of their profession, and when, in advanced age, one found it convenient to retire, the other was not

long in discovering that it suited him to lay down the fasces also. Oh, it is pleasant, as it is rare, to find the same aim linked in yours at forty, which at thirteen helped it to turn over the *Cicero De Amicitia*, or some tale of Antique Friendship which the young heart even then was burning to anticipate!—Co-Grecian with S was Th——, who has since executed with ability various diplomatic functions at the Northern courts. Th—— was a tall, dark, saturnine youth, sparing of speech, with raven locks—Thomas Fanshaw Middleton followed him (now Bishop of Calcutta), a scholar and a gentleman in his teens. He has the reputation of an excellent critic, and is author (besides the *Country Spectator*) of a *Treatise on the Greek Article*, against Sharpe. M is said to bear his mitre high in India, where the *requi novitas* (I dare say) sufficiently justifies the bearing. A humility quite as primitive as that of Jewel or Hooker might not be exactly fitted to impress the minds of those Anglo-Asiatic dooceans with a reverence for home institutions, and the Church which those fathers watered. The manners of M. at school, though firm, were mild and unassuming—Next to M (if not senior to him) was Richards, author of the *Aboriginal Britons*, the most spirited of the Oxford Prize Poems; a pale, studious Grecian—Then followed poor S—— ill-fated M—— ' of these the Muse is silent

Finding some of Edward's race  
Unhappy, pass their annals by

Come back into memory, like as thou wert in the day-springs of thy fancies, with hope like a fiery column before thee—the dark pillar not yet turned—Samuel Taylor Coleridge—Logician, Metaphysician, Bard!—How have I seen the casual passer through the Cloisters stand still, entranced with admiration (while he



by too quick a sense of neglect—all capable of enduring the slights poor Sizars are sometimes subject to in our seats of learning—exchanged their Alma Mater for the camp, perishing, one by climate, and one on the plains of Salamanca.—Le G——, sanguine, volatile, sweet-natured, F——, dogged, faithful, anticipative of insult, warm-hearted, with something of the old Roman height about him

Fine, frank-hearted Fi——, the present master of Hertford, with Marmaduke T——, mildest of Missionaries—and both my good friends still—close the catalogue of Grecians in my time.

# CHRISTMAS.

WASHINGTON IRVING.

## I.

'But is old, old, good old Christmas gone? Nothing but the hair of his good, grey old head and beard left? Well, I will have that, seeing I cannot have more of him.'—HUE AND CRY AFTER CHRISTMAS

'A man might then behold  
At Christmas, in each hall  
Good fires to curb the cold,  
And meat for great and small  
The neighbours were friendly bidden,  
And all had welcome true,  
The poor from the gates were not chidden  
When this old cap was new.'—OLD SONG.

NOTHING in England exercises a more delightful spell over my imagination than the lingerings of the holiday customs and rural games of former times. They recall the pictures my fancy used to draw in the May morning of life, when as yet I only knew the world through books, and believed it to be all that poets had painted it; and they bring with them the flavour of those honest days of yore, in which, perhaps with equal fallacy, I am apt to think the world was more home-bred, social, and joyous than at present. I regret to say that they are daily growing more and more faint, being gradually worn away by time, but still more obliterated by modern fashion. They resemble those picturesque morsels of Gothic architecture which we see crumbling in various parts of the country, partly dilapidated by the waste of ages, and partly lost in the additions and alterations of later days. Poetry, however, clings with cherishing fondness about the rural game and

holiday revel, from which it has derived so many of its themes, as the ivy winds its rich foliage about the Gothic arch and mouldering tower, gratefully repaying their support by clasping together their tottering remains, and, as it were, embalming them in verdure.

Of all the old festivals, however, that of Christmas awakens the strongest and most heartfelt associations. There is a tone of solemn and sacred feeling that blends with our conviviality, and lifts the spirit to a state of hallowed and elevated enjoyment. The services of the church about this season are extremely tender and inspiring. They dwell on the beautiful story of the origin of our faith, and the pastoral scenes that accompanied its announcement. They gradually increase in fervour and pathos during the season of Advent, until they break forth in full jubilee on the morning that brought peace and good-will to men. I do not know a grander effect of music on the moral feelings than to hear the full choir and the pealing organ performing a Christmas anthem in a cathedral, and filling every part of the vast pile with triumphant harmony.

It is a beautiful arrangement, also, derived from days of yore, that this festival, which commemorates the announcement of the religion of peace and love, has been made the season for gathering together of family connections, and drawing closer again those bands of kindred hearts which the cares and pleasures and sorrows of the world are continually operating to cast loose. Of calling back the children of a family, who have launched forth in life, and wandered widely asunder, once more to assemble about the paternal hearth, that rallying-place of the affections, there to grow young and loving again among the endearing mementos of childhood.

There is something in the very season of the year that gives a charm to the festivity of Christmas. At other times we derive a great portion of our pleasures from the mere beauties of nature. Our feelings sally forth and dissipate themselves over the sunny landscape, and we 'live abroad any everywhere.' The song of the bird, the murmur of the stream, the breathing fragrance of spring, the soft voluptuousness of summer, the golden pomp of autumn: earth with its mantle of refreshing green, and heaven with its deep delicious blue and its cloudy magnificence, all fill us with mute but exquisite delight, and we revel in the luxury of mere sensation. But in the depth of winter, when nature lies despoiled of every charm, and wrapped in her shroud of sheeted snow, we turn for our gratifications to moral sources. The dreariness and desolation of the landscape, the short gloomy days and darksome nights, while they circumscribe our wanderings, shut in our feelings also from rambling abroad, and make us more keenly disposed for the pleasure of the social circle. Our thoughts are more concentrated, our friendly sympathies more aroused. We feel more sensibly the charm of each other's society, and are brought more closely together by dependence on each other for enjoyment. Heart calleth unto heart; and we draw our pleasures from the deep wells of loving-kindness which lie in the quiet recesses of our bosoms, and which, when resorted to, furnish forth the pure element of domestic felicity.

The pitchy gloom without makes the heart dilate on entering the room filled with the glow and warmth of the evening fire. The ruddy blaze diffuses an artificial summer and sunshine through the room, and lights up each countenance in a kinder welcome. Where does the honest face of hospitality expand into a

broader and more cordial smile, where is the shy glance of love more sweetly eloquent, than by the winter fireside? and as the hollow blast of wintry wind rushes through the hall, claps the distant door, whistles about the casement, and rumbles down the chimney, what can be more grateful than that feeling of sober and sheltered security with which we look round upon the comfortable chamber and the scene of domestic hilarity?

The English, from the great prevalence of rural habit throughout every class of society, have always been fond of those festivals and holidays which agreeably interrupt the stillness of country life; and they were, in former days, particularly observant of the religious and social rites of Christmas. It is inspiring to read even the dry details which some antiquaries have given of the quaint humours, the burlesque pageants, the complete abandonment to mirth and good fellowship with which this festival was celebrated. It seemed to throw open every door and unlock every heart. It brought the peasant and the peer together and blended all ranks in one warm generous flow of joy and kindness. The old halls of castles and manor-houses resounded with the harp and the Christmas carol, and their ample boards groaned under the weight of hospitality. Even the poorest cottage welcomed the festive season with green decorations of bay and holly, the cheerful fire glanced its rays through the lattice, inviting the passengers to raise the latch, and join the gossip knot huddled round the hearth, beguiling the long evening with legendary jokes and oft-told Christmas tales.

One of the least pleasing effects of modern refinement is the havoc it has made among the hearty old holiday customs. It has completely taken off the

-sharp touchings and spiced reliefs of these embellishments of life, and has worn down society into a more smooth and polished, but certainly a less characteristic, surface. Many of the games and ceremonials of Christmas have entirely disappeared, and, like the -herrie sack of old Falstaff, are become matters of speculation and dispute among commentators. They flourished in times full of spirit and lustiness, when men enjoyed life roughly, but heartily and vigorously : times wild and picturesque, which have furnished poetry with its richest materials, and the drama with its most attractive variety of characters and manners. The world has become more worldly. There is more of dissipation, and less of enjoyment. Pleasure has expanded into a broader, but a shallower stream ; and has forsaken many of those deep and quiet channels where it flowed sweetly through the calm bosom of domestic life. Society has acquired a more enlightened and elegant tone, but it has lost many of its strong local peculiarities, its home-bred feelings, its honest fireside delights. The traditionary customs of golden-hearted antiquity, its feudal hospitalities, and lordly wassailings, have passed away with the baronial castles and stately manor-houses in which they were celebrated. They comported with the shadowy hall, the great oaken gallery, and the tapestried parlour, but are unfitted to the light showy saloons and gay drawing-rooms of the modern villa.

Shorn, however, as it is, of its ancient and festive honours, Christmas is still a period of delightful excitement in England. It is gratifying to see that home feeling completely aroused which holds so powerful a place in every English bosom. The preparations making on every side for the social board that is again to unite friends and kindred ; the presents of good

horse had been profusely decorated with greens for the occasion, and holly and ivy had likewise been wreathed round the helmet and weapons on the opposite wall, which I understood were the arms of the same warrior. I must own, by-the-by, I had strong doubts about the authenticity of the painting and armour as having belonged to the crusader, they certainly having the stamp of more recent days, but I was told that the painting had been so considered time out of mind; and that, as to the armour, it had been found in a lumber room, and elevated to its present situation by the squire, who at once determined it to be the armour of the family hero, and as he was absolute authority on all such subjects in his own household, the matter had passed into current acceptation. A sideboard was set out just under this chivalric trophy, on which was a display of plate that might have vied (at least in variety) with Belshazzar's parade of the vessels of the temple: 'flagons, cans, cups, beakers, goblets, basins, and ewers;' the gorgeous utensils of good companionship that had gradually accumulated through many generations of jovial housekeepers. Before these stood the two Yule candles, beaming like two stars of the first magnitude; other lights were distributed in branches, and the whole array glittered like a firmament of silver.

We were ushered into this banqueting scene with the sound of minstrelsy, the old harper being seated on a stool beside the fireplace, and twanging his instrument with a vast deal more power than melody. Never did Christmas board display a more goodly and gracious assemblage of countenances; those who were not handsome were, at least, happy; and happiness is a rare nuprover of your hard-favoured visage. I always consider an old English family as well worth studying

as a collection of Holbein's portraits or Albert Durer's prints. There is much antiquarian lore to be acquired; much knowledge of the physiognomies of former times. Perhaps it may be from having continually before their eyes those rows of old family portraits, with which the mansions of this country are stocked, certain it is, that the quaint features of antiquity are often most faithfully perpetuated in these ancient lines; and I have traced an old family nose through a whole picture gallery, legitimately handed down from generation to generation, almost from the time of the Conquest. Something of the kind was to be observed in the worthy company around me. Many of their faces had evidently originated in a Gothic age, and been merely copied by succeeding generations, and there was one little girl in particular, of staid demeanour, with a high Roman nose, and an antique vinegar aspect, who was a great favourite of the squire's, being, as he said, a Blacebridge all over, and the very counterpart of one of his ancestors who figured in the court of Henry VIII.

The person said grace, which was not a short familiar one, such as is commonly addressed to the Diet in these unceremonious days; but a long, courtly, well-worded one of the ancient school. There was now a pause, as if something was expected; when suddenly the butler entered the hall with some degree of bustle. He was attended by a servant on each side with a large wax-light, and bore a silver dish, on which was an enormous pig's head, decorated with rosemary, with a lemon in its mouth, which was placed with great formality at the head of the table. The moment this pageant made its appearance, the harper struck up a flourish, at the conclusion of which the young Oxonian, on receiving a hint from the squire, gave,



with an air of the most comic gravity, an old carol, the first verse of which was as follows.

“ Caput apri defero  
Reddens laudes Domino  
The boar's head in hand bring I,  
With garlands gay and rosemary  
I pray you all synge merrily  
Qui estis in convivio ”

Though prepared to witness many of these little eccentricities, from being apprised of the peculiar hobby of mine host, yet, I confess, the parade with which so odd a dish was introduced somewhat perplexed me, until I gathered from the conversation of the squire and the parson, that it was meant to represent the bringing in of the boar's head; a dish formerly served up with much ceremony and the sound of minstrelsy and song, at great tables, on Christmas day. ‘I like the old custom,’ said the squire, ‘not merely because it is stately and pleasing in itself, but because it was observed at the college at Oxford at which I was educated. When I hear the old song chanted, it brings to mind the time when I was young and gamesome, and the noble old college hall, and my fellow-students loitering about in their black gowns; many of whom, poor lads, are now in their graves!’

The parson, however, whose mind was not haunted by such associations, and who was always more taken up with the text than the sentiment, objected to the Oxonian's version of the carol; which he affirmed was different from that sung at college. He went on, with the dry perseverance of a commentator, to give the college reading, accompanied by sundry annotations; addressing himself at first to the company at large; but finding their attention gradually diverted to other talk and other objects, he lowered his tone as his

this season, that he could not prevail upon himself to have one killed.

It would be tedious, perhaps, to my wiser readers, who may not have that foolish fondness for odd and obsolete things to which I am a little given, were I to mention the other make-shifts of this worthy old humorist, by which he was endeavouring to follow up, though at a humble distance, the quaint customs of antiquity. I was pleased, however, to see the respect shown to his whims by his children and relatives; who, indeed, entered readily into the full spirit of them, and seemed all well versed in their parts, having doubtless been present at many a rehearsal. I was amused, too, at the air of profound gravity with which the butler and other servants executed the duties assigned them, however eccentric. They had an old-fashioned look, having, for the most part, been brought up in the household, and grown into keeping with the antiquated mansion and the humours of its lord; and most probably looked upon all his whimsical regulations as the established laws of honourable house-keeping.

When the cloth was removed, the butler brought in a huge silver vessel of rare and curious workmanship, which he placed before the squire. Its appearance was hailed with acclamation; being the Wassail Bowl, so renowned in Christmas festivity. The contents had been prepared by the squire himself; for it was a beverage on the skilful mixture of which he particularly prided himself, alleging that it was too abstruse and complex for the comprehension of an ordinary servant. It was a potation, indeed, that might well make the heart of a toper leap within him; being composed of the richest and raciest wines, highly

sweetened, with roasted apples bobbing about the surface.\*

The old gentleman's whole countenance beamed with a serene look of indwelling delight, as he stirred this mighty bowl. Having raised it to his lips, with a hearty wish of a merry Christmas to all present, he sent it brimming round the board, for every one to follow his example, according to the primitive style; pronouncing it 'the ancient fountain of good feeling, where all hearts met together.'†

There was much laughing and rallying as the honest emblem of Christmas joviality circulated, and was kissed rather coyly by the ladies. When it reached Master Simon, he raised it in both hands, and with the air of a boon companion struck up an old Wassail chanson.

"The brown bowl,  
The merry brown bowl,  
As it goes round about a  
Till  
Till

\* The Wassail Bowl was sometimes composed of ale instead of wine, with nutmeg, sugar, toast, ginger, and roasted crabs; in this way the nut-brown beverage is still prepared in some old families and round the hearths of substantial farmers at Christmas. It is also called Lamb's Wool, and is celebrated by Herrick in his *Twelfth Night*.

'Next crowne the bowle full  
With gentle Lamb's Wool,  
Add sugar, nutmeg, and ginger  
With store of ale too,  
And thus ye must doe  
To make the Wassale a swinger

† The Custom of drinking out of the same cup gave place to each having his cup. When the steward came to the doore with the Wassel, he was to cry three times, *Wassel, Wassel, Wassel* and then chappell (chaplain) was to answer with a song'.  
ARCHÆOLOGIA

Let the world say what it will,  
And drink your fill all out-a  
"The deep canne,  
The meriy deep canne,  
As thou dost freely quaff-a,  
Sing  
Fling,  
Be as merry as a king,  
And sound a lusty laugh-a" †

Much of the conversation during dinner turned upon family topics, to which I was a stranger. There was, however, a great deal of rallying of Master Simon about some gay widow, with whom he was accused of having a flirtation. This attack was commenced by the ladies; but it was continued throughout the dinner by the fat-headed old gentleman next the parson, with the persevering assiduity of a slow hound; being one of those long-winded jokers, who, though rather dull at starting game, are unrivalled for their talents in hunting it down. At every pause in the general conversation, he renewed his bantering in pretty much the same terms; winking hard at me with both eyes, whenever he gave Master Simon what he considered a home thrust. The latter, indeed, seemed fond of being teased on the subject, as old bachelors are apt to be; and he took occasion to inform me, in an undertone, that the lady in question was a prodigiously fine woman, and drove her own curricule.

The dinner-time passed away in this flow of innocent hilarity, and, though the old hall may have resounded in its time with many a scene of broader rout and revel, yet I doubt whether it ever witnessed more honest and genuine enjoyment. How easy it is for one benevolent being to diffuse pleasure around him; and how truly is a kind heart a fountain of gladness, making everything in its vicinity to freshen

† From Poor Robin's Almanac.

into smiles ! the joyous disposition of the worthy squire was perfectly contagious, he was happy himself, and disposed to make all the world happy; and the little eccentricities of his humour did but season, in a manner, the sweetness of his philanthropy

When the ladies had retired, the conversation, as usual, became still more animated; many good things were broached which had been thought of during dinner, but which would not exactly do for a lady's ear, and though I cannot positively affirm that there was much wit uttered, yet I have certainly heard many contests of rare wit produce much less laughter. Wit, after all, is a mighty tart, pungent ingredient, and much too acid for some stomachs, but honest good humour is the oil and wine of a merry meeting, and there is no jovial companionship equal to that where the jokes are rather small, and the laughter abundant

The squire told several long stories of early college pranks and adventures, in some of which the parson had been a sharer, though, in looking at the latter, it required some effort of imagination to figure such a little dark anatomy of a man into the perpetrator of a madcap gambol. Indeed, the two college chums presented pictures of what men may be made by their different lots in life. The squire had left the university to live lustily on his paternal domains, in the vigorous enjoyment of prosperity and sunshine, and had flourished on to a hearty and florid old age, whilst the poor parson, on the contrary, had dried and withered away, among dusty tomes, in the silence and shadows of his study. Still there seemed to be a spark of almost extinguished fire feebly glimmering in the bottom of his soul, and as the squire hinted at a sly story of the parson and a pretty milkmaid, whom they once met on the banks of the Isis, the old gentleman

prompted to all kinds of noisy mirth by the Oxonian and Master Simon, made its old walls ring with their merriment, as they played at romping games. I delight in witnessing the gambols of children, and particularly at this happy holiday season, and could not help stealing out of the drawing-room on hearing one of their peals of laughter. I found them at the game of blind-man's buff Master Simon, who was the leader of their revels and seemed on all occasions to fulfil the office of that ancient potentate, the Lord of Misrule,\* was blinded in the midst of the hall. The little beings were as busy about him as the mock faunes about Falstaff; pinching him, plucking at the skirts of his coat, and tickling him with straws. One fine blue-eyed girl of about thirteen, with her flaxen hair all in beautiful confusion, her frolic face in a glow, her frock half torn off her shoulders, a complete picture of a romp, was the chief tormentor, and, from the slyness with which Master Simon avoided the smaller game, and hemmed this wild little nymph in corners, and obliged her to jump shrieking over chairs, I suspected the rogue of not being a whit more blinded than was convenient.

When I returned to the drawing-room, I found the company seated round the fire, listening to the parson, who was deeply ensconced in a high-backed oaken chair, the work of some cunning artificer of yore, which had been brought from the library for his particular accommodation. From this venerable piece of furniture, with which his shadowy figure and dark weazen face so admirably accorded, he was dealing out strange accounts of the popular superstitions and

\* 'At Christmasse there was in the kinge's house, wheresoever hee was lodged, a lorde of misrule, or mayster of merie disportes and the like had ye in the house of every nobleman of honour or good worshippe, were he spirituall or temporall'—Stowe.

legends of the surrounding country, with which he had become acquainted in the course of his antiquarian researches. I am half inclined to think that the old gentleman was himself somewhat tinctured with superstition, as men are very apt to be who live a recluse and studious life in a sequestered part of the country and pore over black-letter tracts, so often filled with the marvellous and supernatural. He gave us several anecdotes of the fancies of the neighbouring peasantry, concerning the effigy of the crusader which lay on the tomb by the church altar. As it was the only monument of the kind in that part of the country, it had always been regarded with feelings of superstition by the good wives of the village. It was said to get up from the tomb and walk the rounds of the churchyard in stormy nights, particularly when it thundered, and one old woman, whose cottage bordered on the churchyard, had seen it through the windows of the church, when the moon shone, slowly pacing up and down the aisles. It was the belief that some wrong had been left unredressed by the deceased, or some treasure hidden, which kept the spirit in a state of trouble and restlessness. Some talked of gold and jewels buried in the tomb, over which the spectre kept watch; and there was a story current of a sexton in old times, who endeavoured to break his way to the coffin at night, but just as he reached it received a violent blow from the marble hand of the effigy, which stretched him senseless on the pavement. These tales were often laughed at by some of the sturdier among the rustics, yet when night came on, there were many of the stoutest unbelievers that were shy of venturing alone in the footpath that led across the churchyard.

From these and other anecdotes that followed, the crusader appeared to be the favourite hero of ghost stories throughout the vicinity. His picture, which hung up in the hall, was thought by the servants to have something supernatural about it, for they remarked that, in whatever part of the hall you went, the eyes of the warrior were still fixed on you. The old porter's wife, too, at the lodge, who had been born and brought up in the family, and was a great gossip among the maid-servants affirmed that in her young days she had often heard say that on Midsummer eve when it was well known all kinds of ghosts, goblins, and fairies became visible and walk abroad, the crusader used to mount his horse, come down from his picture, ride about the house, down the avenue, and so to the church to visit the tomb; on which occasion the church door most civilly swung open of itself; not that he needed it, for he rode through closed gates and even stone walls and had been seen by one of the dairy maids to pass between two bars of the great park gate, making himself as thin as a sheet of paper.

All these superstitions I found had been very much countenanced by the squire, who, though not superstitious himself, was very fond of seeing others so. He listened to every goblin tale of the neighbouring gossips with infinite gravity, and held the porter's wife in high favour on account of her talent for the marvellous. He was himself a great reader of old legends and romances, and often lamented that he could not believe in them; for a superstitious person, he thought, must live in a kind of fairy land.

Whilst we were all attention to the parson's stories, our ears were suddenly assailed by a burst of heterogeneous sounds from the hall, in which were



mingled something like the clang of rude minstrelsy, with the uproar of many small voices and girlish laughter. The door suddenly flew open, and a train came trooping into the room, that might almost have been mistaken for the breaking up of the court of Fairy. That indefatigable spirit, Master Simon, in the faithful discharge of his duties as lord of misrule, had conceived the idea of a Christmas mummerly or masking; and having called to his assistance the Oxonian and the young officer, who were equally ripe for anything that should occasion romping and merriment, they had carried it into instant effect. The old housekeeper had been consulted; the antique clothes-presses and wardrobes rummaged, and made to yield up the relics of finery that had not seen the light for several generations; the younger part of the company had been privately convened from the parlour and hall, and the whole had been bedizened out, into a burlesque imitation of an antique mask \*

Master Simon led the van, as 'Ancient Christmas,' quaintly apparelled in a ruff, a short cloak, which had very much the aspect of one of the old housekeeper's petticoats, and a hat that might have served for a village steeple, and must indubitably have figured in the days of the Covenanters. From under this his nose curved boldly forth, flushed with a frost-bitten bloom, that seemed a very trophy of a December blast. He was accompanied by the blue-eyed romp, dished up as 'Dame Mince Pie,' in a venerable magnificence of a faded brocade, long stomacher, peaked hat, and high-heeled shoes. The

\* Maskings or mummeries were favourite sports at Christmas in old times, and the wardrobes at halls and manor-houses were often laid under contribution to furnish dresses and fantastic disguisings. I strongly suspect Master Simon to have taken the idea of his from Ben Jonson's *Masque of Christmas*

young officer appeared as Robin Hood, in a sporting dress of Kendal green, and a foraging cap with a gold tassel.

The costume, to be sure, did not bear testimony to deep research, and there was an evident eye to the picturesque, natural to a young gallant in the presence of his mistress. The fair Julia hung on his arm in a pretty rustic dress, as 'Maid Marian'. The rest of the train had been metamorphosed in various ways, the girls trussed up in the finery of the ancient belles of the Bracebridge line, and the striplings bewhiskered with burnt cork, and gravely clad in broad skirts, hanging sleeves, and full-bottomed wigs, to represent the character of Roast Beef, Plum Pudding, and other worthies celebrated in ancient maskings. The whole was under the control of the Oxonian, in the appropriate character of misrule; and I observed that he exercised rather a mischievous sway with his wand over the smaller personages of the pageant.

The irruption of this motley crew, with beat of drum, according to ancient custom, was the consummation of uproar and merriment. Master Simon covered himself with glory by the stateliness with which, as Ancient Christmas, he walked a minuet with the peerless, though giggling, Dame Mince Pie. It was followed by a dance of all the characters, which, from its medley of costumes, seemed as though the old family portraits had skipped down from their frames to join in the sport. Different centuries were figuring at cross hands and right and left; the dark ages were cutting pirouettes and rigadoons; and the days of Queen Bess jiggling merrily down the middle, through a line of succeeding generations.

The worthy squire contemplated these fantastic sports, and this resurrection of his old wardrobe, with

the simple relish of childish delight. He stood chuckling and rubbing his hands, and scarcely hearing a word the parson said, notwithstanding that the latter was discoursing most authentically on the ancient and stately dance of the Pavon, or peacock, from which he conceived the minuet to be derived \* For my part, I was in a continual excitement from the varied scenes of whim and innocent gaiety passing before me. It was inspiring to see wild-eyed frolic and warm-hearted hospitality breaking out from among the chills and glooms of winter, and old age throwing off his apathy, and catching once more the freshness of youthful enjoyment. I felt also an interest in the scene, from the consideration that these fleeting customs were posting fast into oblivion, and that this was, perhaps, the only family in England in which the whole of them was still punctiliously observed. There was a quaintness, too, mingled with all this revelry, that gave it a peculiar zest: it was suited to the time and place; and as the old manor-house almost reeled with mirth and wassail, it seemed echoing back the jovialty of long departed years.†

\* Sir John Hawkins, speaking of the dance called the Pavon, from pavo, a peacock, says, 'It is a grave and majestic dance; the method of dancing it anciently was by gentlemen dressed with caps and swords, by those of the long robe in their gowns, by the peers in their mantles, and by the ladies in gowns with long trains, the motion whereof, in dancing, resembled that of a peacock'—*History of Music*.

† At the time of the first publication of this paper, the picture of an old-fashioned Christmas in the country was pronounced by some as out of date. The author had afterwards an opportunity of witnessing almost all the customs above described, existing in unexpected vigour in the skirts of Derbyshire and Yorkshire, where he passed the Christmas holidays. The reader will find some notice of them in the author's account of his sojourn at Newstead Abbey.

But enough of Christmas and its gambols; it is time for me to pause in this garrulity. Methinks I hear the questions asked by my graver readers, 'To what purpose is all this? how is the world to be made wiser by this talk?' Alas! is there not wisdom enough extant for the instruction of the world? And if not, are there not thousands of able pens labouring for its improvement? It is so much pleasanter to please than to instruct, to play the companion rather than the preceptor

What, after all, is the mite of wisdom that I could throw into the mass of knowledge; or how am I sure that my sagest deductions may be safe guides for the opinions of others? But in writing to amuse, if I fail, the only evil is in my own disappointment. If, however, I can by any lucky chance, in these days of evil, rub out one wrinkle from the brow of care, or beguile the heavy heart of one moment of sorrow, if I can now and then penetrate through the gathering film of misanthropy, prompt a benevolent view of human nature, and make my reader more in good humour with his fellow beings and himself, surely, I shall not then have written entirely in vain

## THE NATION OF LONDON

THOMAS DE QUINCEY

**I**T was a most heavenly day in May of this year (1800), when I first beheld and first entered this mighty wilderness, the city—no! not the city, but the nation—of London. Often since then, at distances of two and three hundred miles or more from this colossal emporium of men, wealth, arts, and intellectual power, have I felt the sublime expression of her enormous magnitude in one simple form of ordinary occurrence, viz., in the vast droves of cattle, suppose upon the great north roads, all with their heads directed to London, and expounding the size of the attracting body, together with the force of its attractive power, by the never-ending succession of these droves, and the remoteness from the capital of the lines upon which they were moving. A suction so powerful, felt along radii so vast, and a consciousness, at the same time, that upon other radii still more vast, both by land and by sea, the same suction is operating, night and day, summer and winter, and hurrying for ever into one centre the infinite means needed for her infinite purposes, and the endless tributes to the skill or to the luxury of her endless population, crowds the imagination with a pomp to which there is nothing corresponding upon this planet, either amongst the things that have been, or the things that are. Or, if any exception there is, it must be sought in ancient Rome.\* We, upon this occasion, were in an open carriage, and,

On the use and peculiarity of these foot-notes by De Quincey see *Notes to this Essay*

\* "*Ancient Rome*"—Vast, however, as the London is of this day, I incline to think that it is below the Rome of Trajan

It has long been a settled opinion amongst scholars, that the computations of Lipsius, on this point, were prodigiously overcharged, and formerly I shared in that belief. But closer study of the question, and a laborious *collation* of the different data (for any single record, independently considered, can here establish nothing), have satisfied me that Lipsius was nearer the truth than his critics; and that the Roman population of every class—slaves, aliens, peoples of the suburbs, included—lay between four and six million: in which case the London of 1833, which counts more than a million and a half, but less than two millions [*Note*—Our present London of 1853 counts two millions, plus as many thousands as there are days in the year], may be taken as lying between one-fourth and one third of Rome. To discuss this question thoroughly, would require a separate memoir, for which, after all, there are not sufficient materials meantime I will make this remark.—That the ordinary computations of a million, or a million and a quarter, derived from the surviving accounts of the different “regions,” apply to Rome *within* the Pomærium, and are, therefore, no more valid for the total Rome of Trajan’s time stretching so many miles beyond it, than the bills of mortality for what is technically “London within the walls,” can serve at this day as a base for estimating the population of that total London which we mean and presume in our daily conversation. *Secondly*, Even for the Rome within these limits, the computations are not commensurate, by not allowing for the prodigious *height* of the houses in Rome, which much transcended that of modern cities. On this last point, I will translate a remarkable sentence from the Greek rhetorician Aristides [*Note*—Aelius Aristides, Greek by his birth who flourished in the time of the Antonines], to some readers it will be new and interesting.—“And, as oftentimes we see that a man who greatly excels others in bulk and strength, is not content with any display, however ostentatious, of his powers, short of that where he is exhibited surmounting himself with a pyramid of other men, one set standing upon the shoulders of another, so also this city, stretching forth her foundations over areas so vast, is yet not satisfied with those superficial dimensions, *that* contents her not, but upon one city rearing another of corresponding proportions, and upon that another, pile resting upon pile, houses overlaying houses in aerial succession, so and by similar steps, she achieves a character of architecture justifying as it were, the very promise of her name, and its Grecian meaning, we may say, that here nothing meets our eyes in any direction but mere *Rome! Rome!*” [*Note*—This word Rome, on which the rhetorician plays, is the Common Greek term for *strength*] “And hence,” says Aristides, “I derive the following conclusion—that, if any one, decomposing this

chiefly (as I imagine) to avoid the dust, we approached London by rural lanes, where any such could be found, or, at least, along by-roads, quiet and shady, collateral to the main roads. In that mode of approach, we missed some features of the sublimity belonging to any of the common approaches upon a main road; we missed the whirl and the uproar, the tumult and the agitation,

series of strata, were disposed to unshell, as it were, this existing Rome from its present crowded and towering co-acervations, and thus degrading these aerial Romes, were to plant them on the ground, side by side, in orderly succession, according to all appearance, the whole vacant area of Italy would be filled with these dismantled storeys of Rome, and we should be presented with the spectacle of one continuous city, stretching its labyrinthine pomp to the shores of the Adriatic." This is so far from being meant as a piece of rhetoric, that, on the very contrary, the whole purpose is to substitute for a vague and rhetorical expression of the Roman grandeur, one of a more definite character—viz., by presenting its dimensions in a new form, and supposing the city to be uncrested, as it were, its upper tiers to be what the sailors call *unshipped*, and the dethroned storeys to be all drawn up in rank and file upon the ground, according to which assumption, he implies that the city would stretch from the *mare Superum* to the *mare Inferum*, i.e., from the sea of Tuscany to the Adriatic.

The fact is, as Casaubon remarked, upon occasion of a ridiculous blunder in estimating the largesses of a Roman emperor, that the error on most questions of Roman policy or institutions tends not, as is usual, in the direction of excess, but of defect. All things were colossal there, and the probable, as estimated upon our modern scale, is not unfrequently the impossible, as regarded Roman habits. Lipsius certainly erred extravagantly at times, and was a rash speculator on many subjects: witness his book on the Roman amphitheatres; but not on the magnitude of Rome, or the amount of its population. I will add, upon this subject, that the whole political economy of the ancients, if we except Boeckh's accurate investigations (*Die Staatshaushaltung der Athener*), which, properly speaking, cannot be called political economy, is a mine into which scarce a single shaft has yet been sunk. But I must also add, that everything will depend upon *collation* of facts, and the bringing of indirect notices into immediate juxtaposition, so as to throw light on each other. *Direct* and positive information there is little on these topics; and that little has been gleaned.

which continually thicken and thicken throughout the last dozen miles before you reach the suburbs. Aheady, at three stages' distance (say, 40 miles from London), upon some of the greatest roads, the dim presentiment of some vast capital reaches you obscurely, and like a misgiving. This blind sympathy with a mighty but unseen object some vast magnetic range of Alps, in your neighbourhood, continues to increase, you know not how. Arrived at the last station for changing horses, Barnet, suppose, on one of the north roads, or Hounslow on the western, you no longer think (as in all other places) of naming the next stage; nobody says, on pulling up, "Horses on to London"—that would sound ludicrous, one mighty idea broods over all minds, making it impossible to suppose any other destination. Launched upon this final stage, you soon begin to feel yourself entering the stream as it were of a Norwegian *maelstrom*, and the stream at length becomes the rush of a cataract. What is meant by the Latin word *trepidatio*? Not anything peculiarly connected with panic; it belongs as much to the hurrying to and fro of a coming battle, as of a coming flight; to a marriage festival as much as to a massacre, *agitation* is the nearest English word. This *trepidation* increases both audibly and visibly at every half mile pretty much as one may suppose the road of Niagara and the thrilling of the ground to grow upon the senses in the last ten miles of approach, with the wind in its favour, until at length it would absorb and extinguish all other sounds whatsoever. Finally, for miles before you reach a suburb of London such as Islington, for instance, a last great sign and augury of the immensity which belongs to the coming metropolis forces itself upon the dullest observer, in the growing sense of his own utter insignificance. Everywhere else



in England, you yourself, horses, carriage, attendants (if you travel with any), are regarded with attention, perhaps even curiosity. at all events you are seen. But, after passing the final post-house on every avenue to London, for the latter ten or twelve miles, you become aware that you are no longer noticed: nobody sees you; nobody hears you; nobody regards you, you do not even regard yourself. In fact, how should you, at the moment of first ascertaining your own total unimportance in the sum of things—a poor shivering unit in the aggregate of human life? Now, for the first time, whatever manner of man you were, or seemed to be at starting, squire or “squireen,” lord or lordling, and however related to that city, hamlet, or solitary house, from which yesterday or to-day you slipped your cable, —beyond disguise you find yourself but one wave in a total Atlantic, one plant (and a parasitical plant besides, needing alien props) in a forest of America.

These are feelings which do not belong by preference to thoughtful people—far less to people merely sentimental. No man ever was left to himself for the first time in the streets, as yet unknown, of London, but he must have been saddened and mortified, perhaps terrified, by the sense of desertion and utter loneliness which belong to his situation. No loneliness can be like that which weighs upon the heart in the centre of faces never-ending, without voice or utterance for him, eyes innumerable, that have “no speculation” in their orbs which *he* can understand; and hurrying figures of men and women weaving to and fro, with no apparent purposes intelligible to a stranger, seeming like a mask of maniacs, or, oftentimes, like a pageant of phantoms. The great length of the streets in many quarters of London; the continual open-

ing of transient glimpses into other vistas equally far-stretching, going off at right-angles to the one which you are traversing, and the murky atmosphere which, settling upon the remoter end of every long avenue, wraps its termination in gloom and uncertainty, all these are circumstances aiding that sense of vastness and illimitable proportions which for ever brood over the aspect of London in its interior. Much of the feeling which belongs to the outside of London, in its approaches for the last few miles, I had lost, in consequence of the stealthy route of by-roads, lying near Uxbridge and Watford, through which we crept into the suburbs. But for that reason, the more abrupt and startling had been the effect of emerging somewhere into the Edgware Road, and soon afterwards into the very streets of London itself;—through *what* streets, or even what quarter of London, is now totally obliterated from my mind, having perhaps never been comprehended. All that I remember is one monotonous awe and blind sense of mysterious grandeur and Babylonian confusion, which seemed to pursue and to invest the whole equipage of human life, as we moved for nearly two\* hours through streets; sometimes brought to anchor for ten minutes or more, by what is technically called a “lock,” that is, a line of carriages of every description inextricably massed, and obstructing each other, far as the eye could stretch; and then, as if under an enchanter’s rod, the “lock” seemed to thaw; motion spread with the fluent race of light or sound through the whole icebound mass, until the subtle influence reached us also, who were again absorbed into the great rush of flying carriages; or, at

\* “*Two hours*”—This slow progress must, however, in part be ascribed to Mr Gr——’s non-acquaintance with the roads, both town and rural, along the whole line of our progress from Uxbridge

times, we turned off into some less tumultuous street, but of the same mile-long character; and, finally, drawing up about noon, we alighted at some place, which is as little within my distinct remembrance as the route by which we reached it.

For what had we come? To see London. And what were the limits within which we proposed to crowd that little feat? At five o'clock we were to dine at Porters——, a seat of Lord Westport's grandfather; and, from the distance, it was necessary that we should leave London at half-past three; so that a little more than three hours were all we had for London. Our charioteer, my friend's tutor, was summoned away from us on business until that hour; and we were left, therefore, entirely to ourselves and to our own skill in turning the time to the best account, for contriving (if such a thing were possible) to do something or other which, by any fiction of courtesy, or constructively, so as to satisfy a lawyer, or in a sense sufficient to win a wager, might be taken and received for having "seen London."

What could be done? We sat down, I remember, in a mood of despondency, to consider. The spectacles were too many by thousands; *inopes nos copia fecit*; our very wealth made us poor; and the choice was distracted. But which of them all could be thought general or representative enough to stand for the universe of London? We could not traverse the whole circumference of this mighty orb; that was clear; and, therefore, the next best thing was to place ourselves as much as possible in some relation to the spectacles of London, which might answer to the centre. Yet how? That sounded well and metaphysical; but what did it mean if acted upon? What

was the centre of London for any purpose whatever—latitudinarian or longitudinarian—literary, social, or mercantile—geographical, astronomical, or (as Mrs. Malaprop kindly suggests) diabolical? Apparently that we should stay at our inn for in that way we seemed best to distribute our presence equally amongst all, viz, by going to none in particular

Three times in my life I have had my taste—that is my sense of proportions—memorably outraged. Once was, by a painting of Cape Horn, which seemed almost treasonably below its rank and office in this world—as the terminal abutment of our mightiest continent, and also the lunge, as it were, of our greatest circumnavigations—of all, in fact, which can be called *classical* circumnavigations. To have “doubled Cape Horn”—at one time, what a sound it had!—yet how ashamed we should be if that cape were ever to be seen from the moon! A party of Englishmen, I have heard, went up Mount Etna, during the night, to be ready for sunrise—a common practice with tourists both in Switzerland, Wales, Cumberland, &c; but, as all must see who take the trouble to reflect, not likely to repay the trouble; seeing that everything which offers a *picture*, when viewed from a station nearly horizontal, becomes a mere *map* to an eye placed at an elevation of 3,000 feet above it; and so thought, in the sequel, the Etna party. The sun, indeed, rose visibly and not more apparelled in clouds than was desirable. yet so disappointed were they, and so disgusted with the sun in particular, that they unanimously *hissed* him, though, of course, it was useless to cry “Off! off!” Here, however, the fault was in their own erroneous expectations, and not in the sun, who, doubtless, did his best. For, generally, a sunrise and sunset ought to be seen from the valley, or at

most horizontally.\* But as to Cape Horn, *that* (by comparison with its position and its functions) was really a disgrace to the planet; it is not the spectator that is in fault *here*, but the object itself, the Birmingham cape. For, consider, it is not only the "specular mount," keeping watch and ward over a sort of trinity of oceans, and, by all tradition, the circumnavigator's gate of entrance to the Pacific, but also it is the temple of the god Terminus for all the Americas. So that, in relation to such dignities, it seemed to me, in the drawing, a makeshift, put up by a carpenter, until the true Cape Horn should be ready; or, perhaps, a drop scene from the opera-house. This was one case of disproportion: the others were—the final and ceremonial valediction of Garrick, on retiring from his profession, and the Pall Mall inauguration of George IV on the day of his accession† to the throne.

\* Hence it may be said, that nature regulates our position for such spectacles, without any intermeddling of ours. When, indeed, a mountain stands, like Snowdon or Great Gavel in Cumberland, at the centre of a mountainous region, it is not denied that, at some seasons, when the early beams strike through great vistas in the hills, splendid effects of light and shade are produced, strange, however, rather than beautiful. But from an insulated mountain, or one upon the outer ring of the hilly tract, such as Skiddaw, in Cumberland, the first effect is to translate the landscape from a *picture* into a *map*, and the total result, as a celebrated author once said, is the *infinity of littleness*.

† Accession was it, or his proclamation? The case was this—About the middle of the day, the king came out into the portico of Carlton House; and addressing himself (addressing his gestures I mean) to the assemblage of people in Pall Mall he bowed repeatedly to the right and to the left, and then retired. I mean no disrespect to that prince in recalling those circumstances: no doubt he acted upon the suggestion of others, and, perhaps, also under a sincere emotion on witnessing the enthusiasm of those outside—but *that* could not cure the original absurdity of recognising as a representative audience, clothed with the national functions of recognising *himself*, a chance gathering of passengers through a single street between whom

The utter irrelation, in both cases, of the audience to the scene (*audience*, I say, as say we must, for the sum of the spectators in the second instance, as well as of the auditors in the first) threw upon each a ridicule not to be effaced. It is in any case impossible for an actor to say words of farewell to those for whom he really designs his farewell. He cannot bring his true object before himself. To whom is it that he would offer his last adieus? We are told by one—who, if he loved Garrick, certainly did not love Garrick's profession, nor would even, through him, have paid it any undue compliment—that the retirement of this great artist had "eclipsed the gaiety of nations." To nations, then, to his own generation, it was that he owed his farewell but, of a generation, what organ is there which can sue or be sued, that can thank or be thanked? Neither by fiction nor by delegation, can you bring their bodies into court. A king's audience, on the other hand, *might* be had as an authorised representative body. But, when we consider the composition of a casual and chance auditory, whether in a street or a theatre, secondly, the small size of a modern audience, even in Drury Lane (4500 at the most), not by one-eightieth part the *complement* of the circus Maximus, most of all, when we consider the want of symmetry or commensurateness, to any extended duration of time, in the *acts* of such an audience, which acts lie in the vanishing expressions of its vanishing emotions—acts so essentially fugitive, even when organised into an art and a tactical system of *imbrices* and *bombi* (as they were at Alexandria, and afterwards at the Neapolitan and Roman theatres), that they could not protect themselves from dying in and any mob from his own stables and kitchens there could be no essential difference which logic, or law, or constitutional principle could recognise

the very moment of their birth—laying together all these considerations, we see the incongruity of any audience, so constituted, to any purpose less evanescent than their own tenure of existence.

Just such in disproportion as these cases had severally been, was our present problem in relation to our time or other means for accomplishing it. In debating the matter, lost half an hour; but at length we reduced the question to a choice between Westminster Abbey and St. Paul's Cathedral. I know not that we could have chosen better. The rival edifices, as we understood from the waiter, were about equidistant from our own station; but, being too remote from each other to allow of our seeing both, "we tossed up," to settle the question between the elder lady and the younger "Heads" came up, which stood for the Abbey. But, as neither of us was quite satisfied with this decision, we agreed to make another appeal to the wisdom of chance, second thoughts being best. This time the Cathedral turned up; and so it came to pass that with us, the having *seen London* meant having seen St Paul's.

The first view of St Paul's, it may be supposed, over-whelmed us with awe; and I did not at the time imagine that the sense of magnitude could be more deeply impressed. One thing interrupted our pleasure. The superb objects of curiosity within the Cathedral were shown for separate fees. There were seven, I think; and any one could be seen independently of the rest for a few pence. The whole amount was a trifle; fourteenpence, I think; but we were followed by a sort of persecution—"Would we not see the bell?"—"Would we not see the model?"—"Surely we would not go away without visiting the Whispering Gallery?" solicitations which troubled the

silence and sanctity of the place, and must tease others as it then teased us, who wished to contemplate in quiet this great monument of the national grandeur, which was at that very time\* beginning to take a station also in the land, as a depository for the dust of her heroes. What struck us most in the whole interior of the pile, was the view taken from the spot immediately under the dome, being, in fact, the very same which, five years afterwards, received the remains of Lord Nelson. In one of the aisles going off from this centre, we saw the flags of France, Spain, and Holland, the whole trophies of the war, swinging pompously, and expanding their massy draperies, slowly and heavily, in the upper gloom, as they were swept at intervals by currents of air. At this moment we were provoked by the showman at our elbow renewing his vile iteration of "Twopence, gentlemen, no more than twopence for each;" and so on, until we left the place. The same complaint has been often made as to Westminster Abbey. Where the wrong lies, or where it commences, I know not. Certainly I nor any man can have a right to expect that the poor men who attend us should give up their time for nothing, or even to be angry with them for a sort of persecution on the degree of which possibly might depend the comfort of their own families. Thoughts of famishing children at home, leave little room for nice regards of delicacy abroad. The individuals, therefore, might or might not be blameable. But in any case the system is palpably wrong. The nation is entitled to a free enjoyment of its own public monuments not free only in the sense of being gratuitous.

\* Already monuments had been voted by the House of Commons in this cathedral, and I am not sure but they were nearly completed to two captains who had fallen at the Nile.



but free also from the molestation of *showmen*, with their imperfect knowledge and their vulgar sentiment.

Yet, after all, what is this system of restriction and annoyance, compared with that which operates on the use of the national libraries; or *that*, again, to the system of exclusion from some of these, where an absolute interdict lies upon any use at all of that which is confessedly national property? Books and MSS, which were collected originally, and formally bequeathed to the public, under the generous and noble idea of giving to future generations advantages which the collector had himself not enjoyed, and liberating them from obstacles in the pursuit of knowledge which experience had bitterly imputed upon his own mind, are at this day locked up as absolutely against me, you, or anybody, as collections confessedly private. Nay, far more so; for most private collectors of eminence, as the late Mr Heber, for instance, have been distinguished for liberality in lending the rarest of their books to those who knew how to use them with effect. But, in the cases I now contemplate, the whole funds for supporting the proper offices attached to a library, such as librarians, sub-librarians, &c., which of themselves (and without the express verbal evidence of the founder's will) presume a *public* in the daily use of the books, else they are superfluous, have been applied to the creation of lazy sinecures, in behalf of persons expressly charged with the care of shutting out the public. Therefore, it is true they are *not* sinecures for that one care, vigilantly to keep out the public, they do take upon themselves, and why? A man loving books like myself, might suppose that their motive was the ungenerous one of keeping the books to themselves. Far from it. In several instances, they will as little use the books as suffer them to be

used. And thus the whole plans and cares of the good (weighing his motives, I will say of the *pious*) founder have terminated in locking up and sequestering a large collection of books, some being great rarities, in situations where they are not accessible. Had he bequeathed them to the catacombs of Paris or of Naples, he could not have better provided for their virtual extinction. I ask, does no action at common law lie against the promoters of such enormous abuses? Oh, thou fervent reformer—whose fatal tread he that puts his ear to the ground may hear at a distance coming onwards upon *every* road—if too surely thou wilt work for me and others irreparable wrong and suffering, work also for us a little good; this way turn the great hurricanes and lavanters of thy wrath; winnow me this chaff; and let us enter at last the garners of pure wheat laid up in elder days for our benefit, and which for two centuries have been closed against our use!

London we left in haste, to keep an engagement of some standing at the Earl Howe's, my friend's grandfather. This great admiral, who had filled so large a station in the public eye, being the earliest among the naval heroes of England in the first war of the Revolution, and the only one of noble birth, I should have been delighted to see; St. Paul's, and its naval monuments to Captain Ruou and Captain——, together with its floating pageantries of conquered flags, having awakened within me, in a form peculiar solemnity, those patriotic remembrances of past glories, which all boys feel so much more vividly than men can do, in whom the sensibility to such impressions is blunted. Lord Howe, however, I was not destined to see; he had died about a year before. Another death there had been, and very recently, in the family, and under circumstances peculiarly startling; and the spirits of

the whole house were painfully depressed by that event at the time of our visit. One of the daughters, a younger sister of my friend's mother, had been engaged for some time to a Scottish nobleman, the Earl of Morton, much esteemed by the royal family. The day was at length fixed for the marriage; and about a fortnight before that day arrived, some particular dress or ornament was brought to Porters, in which it was designed that the bride should appear at the altar. The fashion as to this point has often varied; but at that time, I believe the custom was for bridal parties to be in full dress. The lady, when the dress arrived, was, to all appearance, in good health; but, by one of those unaccountable misgivings which are on record in so many well-attested cases (as that, for example, of Andrew Marvell's father), she said, after gazing for a minute or two at the beautiful dress, firmly and pointedly, "So, then, *that* is my wedding dress; and it is expected that I shall wear it on the 17th; but I shall *not*; I shall never wear it. On Thursday the 17th, I shall be dressed in a shroud!" All present were shocked at such a declaration, which the solemnity of the lady's manner made it impossible to receive as a jest. The countess, her mother, even reproved her with some severity for the words, as an expression of distrust in the goodness of God. The bride-elect made no answer, but by sighing heavily. Within a fortnight, all happened, to the letter, as she had predicted. She was taken suddenly ill; she died about three days before the marriage day; and was finally dressed in her shroud, according to the natural course of the funeral arrangements, on the morning that was to have been the wedding festival.

Lord Morton, the nobleman thus suddenly and remarkably bereaved of his bride, was the only gentle-

man who appeared at the dinner table. He took a particular interest in literature; and it was, in fact, through *his* kindness that, for the first time in my life, I found myself somewhat in the situation of a "*lion*." The occasion of Lord Morton's flattering notice was a particular copy of verses which had gained for me a public distinction, not, however, I must own, a very brilliant one, the prize awarded to me being not the first, nor even the second—what on the Continent is called the *accessit*—it was simply the third: and that fact, stated nakedly, might have left it doubtful whether I were to be considered in the light of one honoured or of one stigmatised. However, the judges in this case, with more honesty, or more self-distrust, than belongs to most adjudications of the kind, had printed the first three of the successful essays. Consequently, it was left open to each of the less successful candidates to benefit by any difference of taste amongst their several friends, and *my* friends in particular, with the single and singular exception of my mother, who always thought her own children inferior to other people's, had generally assigned the palm to myself. Lord Morton protested loudly that the case admitted of no doubt, that gross injustice had been done me, and, as the ladies of the family were much influenced by his opinion, I thus came, not only to wear the laurel in their estimation, but also with the advantageous addition of having suffered some injustice. I was not only a victor, but a victor in misfortune.

At this moment, looking back from a distance of fifty years upon those trifles, it may well be supposed that I do not attach so much importance to the subject of my fugitive honours, as to have any very decided opinion one way or the other upon my own

proportion of merit. I do not even recollect the major part of the verses : that which I *do* recollect, inclines me to think that, in the structure of the metre, and in the choice of the expressions, I had some advantage over my competitors, though otherwise, perhaps, my verses were less finished ; Lord Morton might, therefore, in a partial sense, have been just as well as kind. But, little as that may seem likely, even then, and at the moment of reaping some advantage from my honours, which gave me a consideration with the family I was amongst such as I could not else have had, most unaffectedly I doubted in my own mind whether I were really entitled to the praises which I received. My own verses had not at all satisfied myself, and, though I felt elated by the notice they had gained me, and gratified by the generosity of the earl in taking my part so warmly, I was so more in a spirit of sympathy with the kindness thus manifested in my behalf, and with the consequent kindness which it procured me from others, than from any incitement or support which it gave to my intellectual pride. In fact, whatever estimate I might make of those intellectual gifts which I believed or which I knew myself to possess, I was inclined, even in those days, to doubt whether my natural vocation lay towards poetry. Well, indeed, I knew, and I know that—had I chosen to enlist amongst the *soi-disant* poets of the day—amongst those, I mean, who, by mere force of *talent* and mimetic skill, contrive to sustain the part of poet in a scenical sense, and with a scenical effect—I also could have won such laurels as are won by such merit ; I also could have taken and sustained a place *taliter qualiter* amongst the poets of the time. Why not then ? Simply because I knew that me, as them, would await the certain destiny in reversion of resign-

ing that place in the next generation, to some younger candidate having equal or greater skill in appropriating the vague sentiments and old traditional language of passion spread through books, but having also the advantage of novelty, and of a closer adaptation to the prevailing taste of the day. Even at that early age I was keenly alive, if not so keenly as at this moment, to the fact—that by far the larger proportion of what is received in every age for poetry, and for a season usurps that consecrated name, is *not* the spontaneous overflow of real unaffected passion, deep, and at the same time original, and also forced into public manifestation of itself from the necessity which cleaves to all passion alike of seeking external sympathy: this it is *not*, but a counterfeit assumption of such passion, according to the more or less accurate skill of the writer in distinguishing the key of passion suited to the particular age, and a concurrent assumption of the language of passion according to his more or less skill in separating the spurious from the native and legitimate diction of genuine emotion. Rarely, indeed, are the reputed poets of any age men who groan, like prophets, under the burden of a message which they have to deliver, and *must* deliver, of a mission which they *must* discharge. Generally, nay, with much fewer exceptions, perhaps, than would be readily believed, they are merely simulators of the part they sustain, speaking not out of the abundance of their own hearts, but by skill and artifice assuming or personating emotions at second-hand; and the whole is a business of talent (sometimes even of great talent), but not of original power, of genius,\* or authentic inspiration.

\* The words *genius* and *talent* are frequently distinguished from each other by those who evidently misconstrue the true

From Porters, after a few days' visit, we returned to Eton. Her majesty about this time gave some splendid *fêtes* at Frogmore; to one or two of which she had directed that we should be invited. The invitation was, of course, on my friend's account; but her majesty had condescended to direct that I, as his visitor, should be specially included. Lord Westport, young as he was, had become tolerably indifferent about such things; but to me such a scene was a novelty, and, on that account, it was settled we should go as early as was permissible. We *did* go: and I was not sorry to have had the gratification of witnessing (if it were but for once or twice) the splendours of a royal party. But, after the first edge of expectation was taken off, after the vague uncertainties of rustic ignorance had given place to absolute realities, and the eye had become a little familiar with the flashing of the jewellery, I began to suffer under the constraints incident to a young person in such a situation—the situation, namely, of sedentary passive-distinction entirely, and sometimes so grossly, as to use them by way of expressions for a mere difference in *degree*. Thus, “a man of great talent, absolutely a *genius*,” occurs in a very well-written tale at this moment before me; as if being a man of genius implied only a greater than ordinary degree of talent.

*Talent* and *genius* are in no one point allied to each other, except generically—that both express modes of intellectual power. But the kinds of power are not merely different, they are in polar opposition to each other. *Talent* is intellectual power of every kind, which acts and manifests itself by and through the *will*, and the *active* forces. *Genius*, as the verbal origin implies, is that much rarer species of intellectual power which is derived from the *genial* nature—from the spirit of suffering and enjoying—from the spirit of pleasure and pain, as organised more or less perfectly, and thus is independent of the will. It is a function of the *passive* nature. *Talent* is conversant with the adaptation of means to ends. But *genius* is conversant only with ends. *Talent* has no sort of connection, not the most remote or shadowy, with the *moral* nature or temperament—*genius* is steeped and saturated with this moral nature.

ness, where one is acted upon, but does not act. The music, in fact, was all that continued to delight me; and, but for *that*, I believe, I should have had some difficulty in avoiding so monstrous an indecorum as yawning. I revise this faulty expression, however, on the spot: not the music only it was, but the music combined with the dancing, that so deeply impressed me. The ball-room—a temporary erection, with something of the character of a pavilion about it—wore an elegant and festal air, the part allotted to the dancers being fenced off by a gilded lattice-work, and ornamented beautifully from the upper part with drooping festoons of flowers. But all the luxury that spoke to the eye merely, faded at once by the side of impassioned dancing, sustained by impassioned music. Of all the scenes which this world offers, none is to me so profoundly interesting, none (I say it deliberately) so affecting, as the spectacle of men and women floating through the mazes of a dance, under these conditions, however, that the music shall be rich, resonant, and festal, the execution of the dancers perfect, and the dance itself of a character to admit of free, fluent, and *continuous* motion. But this last condition will be sought vainly in the quadrilles, &c., which have for so many years banished the truly beautiful *country-dances* native to England. Those whose taste and sensibility were so defective as to substitute for the *beautiful* in dancing the merely *difficult*, were sure, in the end, to transfer the deprivations of this art from the opera-house to the floors of private ball-rooms. The tendencies even then were in that direction, but as yet they had not attained their final stage: and the English country-dance\*

\* This word, I am well aware, grew out of the French word *contredanse*, indicating the regular contraposition of male and



was still in estimation at the courts of princes. Now, of all dances, this is the only one, as a class, of which you can truly describe the motion to be *continuous*, that is, not interrupted or fitful, but unfolding its fine mazes with the equability of light in its diffusion through free space. And wherever the music happens to be not of a light, trivial character, but charged with the spirit of festal pleasure, and the performers in the dance so far skilful as to betray no awkwardness verging on the ludicrous, I believe that many people feel as I feel in such circumstances, viz., derive from the spectacle the very *grandest* form of passionate sadness which can belong to any spectacle whatsoever. *Sadness* is not the exact word, nor is there *any* word in any language (because none in the finest languages) which exactly expresses the state; since it is not a depressing, but a most elevating state to which I allude. And, certainly, it is easy to understand, that many states of pleasure, and in particular the highest, are the most of all removed from merriment. The day on which a Roman triumphed was the most gladsome day of his existence; it was the crown and consummation of his prosperity; yet assuredly it was also to him the most solemn of his days. Festal music, of a rich and passionate character, is the most remote of any from vulgar hilarity. Its very gladness and pomp is impregnated with sadness; but sadness of a grand

female partners in the first arrangement of the dancers. The word *country-dance* was therefore originally a corruption, but, having once arisen and taken root in the language, it is far better to retain it in its colloquial form. better, I mean, on the general principle concerned in such cases. For it, is, in fact, by such corruptions, by offsets upon an old stock, arising through ignorance or mispronunciation originally, that every language is frequently enriched, and new modifications of thought, unfolding themselves in the progress of society generate for themselves concurrently appropriate expressions.

and aspiring order. Let, for instance (since without individual illustrations there is the greatest risk of being misunderstood) any person of musical sensibility listen to the exquisite music composed by Beethoven, as an opening for Burger's "*Lenore*," the running idea of which is the triumphal return of a crusading host, decorated with laurel and with palms, within the gates of their native city; and then say whether the prevailing feeling, in the midst of this tumultuous festivity, be not, by infinite degrees, transcendent to anything so vulgar as hilarity. In fact, laughter itself is of all things the most equivocal,—as the organ of the ludicrous, laughter is allied to the trivial and the mean, as the organ of joy, it is allied to the passionate and the noble. From all which the reader may comprehend, if he should not happen experimentally to have felt, that a spectacle of young men and women, *flowing* through the mazes of an intricate dance under a full volume of music, taken with all the circumstantial adjuncts of such a scene in rich men's halls, the blaze of lights and jewels, the life, the motion, the sea-like undulation of heads, the interweaving of the figures, the self-revolving, both of the dance and the music, "*never ending, still beginning*," and the continual regeneration of order from a system of motions which for ever touch the very brink of confusion: that such a spectacle, with such circumstances, may happen to be capable of exciting and sustaining the very grandest emotions of philosophic melancholy to which the human spirit is open. The reason is, in part, that such a scene presents a sort of mask of human life, with its whole equipage of pomps and glories, its luxury of sight and sound, its hours of golden youth, and the interminable revolution of ages hurrying after ages, and

one generation treading upon the flying footsteps of another; whilst all the while the overruling music attempers the mind to the spectacle, the subject to the object, the beholder to the vision. And, although this is known to be but one phasis of life—of life culminating and in ascent—yet the other (and repulsive) phasis is concealed upon the hidden or averted side of the golden arras, known but not felt: or is seen but dimly in the rear, crowding into indistinct proportions. The effect of the music is, to place the mind in a state of elective attraction for everything in harmony with its own prevailing key.

This pleasure, as always on similar occasions, I had at present; but naturally in a degree corresponding to the circumstances of *royal* splendour through which the scene revolved, and, if I have spent rather more words than should reasonably have been requisite in describing any obvious state of emotion, it is not because, in itself, it is either vague or doubtful, but because it is difficult, without calling upon a reader for a little reflection, to convince him that there is not something paradoxical in the assertion, that joy and festal pleasure, of the highest kind, are liable to a *natural* combination with solemnity, or even with melancholy the most profound. Yet, to speak in the mere simplicity of truth, so mysterious is human nature, and so little to be read by him who runs, that almost every weighty aspect of truth upon that theme will be found at first sight to be startling, or sometimes paradoxical. And so little need is there for chasing or courting paradox, that, on the contrary, he who is faithful to his own experiences will find all his efforts little enough to keep down the paradoxical air besieging much of what he *knows* to be the truth. No man needs to *search* for paradox in

this world of ours Let him simply confine himself to the truth, and he will find paradox growing everywhere under his hands as rank as weeds. For new truths of importance are rarely agreeable to any preconceived theories, that is, cannot be explained by these theories; which are insufficient, therefore, even where they are true And universally, it must be borne in mind—that not *that* is paradox which, seeming to be true, is upon examination false, may upon examination be found true.\*

The pleasure of which I have been speaking belongs to all such scenes; but on this particular occasion there was also something more To see persons in "the body," of whom you have been reading in newspapers from the very earliest of your reading days—those, who have hitherto been great *ideas* in your childish thoughts, to see and to hear moving and talking as carnal existences amongst other human beings—had, for the first half hour or so, a singular and strange effect But this naturally waned rapidly after it had once begun to wane And when these first startling impressions of novelty had worn off, it must be confessed that the peculiar circumstances attaching to a royal ball were not favourable to its joyousness or genial spirit of enjoyment. I am not going to repay her majesty's condescension so ill, or so much to abuse the privileges of a guest, as to draw upon my recollections of what passed for the materials of a cynical critique Everything was done, I doubt not,

\* And therefore it was with strict propriety that Boyle, anxious to fix public attention upon some truths of hydrostatics, published them avowedly as *paradoxes*. According to the false popular notion of what it is that constitutes a paradox, Boyle should be taken to mean that these hydrostatic theorems were fallacies But far from it Boyle solicits attention to these propositions—not as seeming to be true and turning out false, but reversely, as wearing an air of falsehood and turning out true

which court etiquette permitted, to thaw those ungenial restraints which gave to the whole too much of a ceremonial and official character, and to each actor in the scene gave too much of the air belonging to one who is discharging a duty, and to the youngest even among the principal personages concerned, gave an apparent anxiety and jealousy of manner—jealousy, I mean, not of others, but a prudential jealousy of his own possible oversights or trespasses. In fact, a great personage bearing a state character cannot be regarded, nor regard himself, with the perfect freedom which belongs to social intercourse, no, nor ought to be. It is not rank alone which is here concerned that, as being his own, he might lay aside for an hour or two; but he bears a representative character also. He has not his own rank only, but the rank of others to protect: he (supposing him the sovereign or a prince near to the succession) embodies and impersonates the majesty of a great people, and this character, were you ever so much encouraged to do so, you, the *lay* spectator or “assister,” neither could nor ought to dismiss from your thoughts. Besides all which, it must be acknowledged, that to see brothers dancing with sisters—as too often occurred in those dances to which the princesses were parties—disturbed the appropriate interest of the scene, being irreconcilable with the allusive meaning of dancing in general, and laid a weight upon its gaiety which no condescensions from the highest quarter could remove. This infelicitous arrangement forced the thoughts of all present upon the exalted rank of the parties which could dictate and exact so unusual an assortment. And that rank, again, it presented to us under one of its least happy aspects: as insulating a blooming young woman amidst the

choir of her coevals, and surrounding her with dreadful solitude amidst a vast crowd of the young, the brave, the beautiful, and the accomplished

Meantime, as respected myself individually, I had reason to be grateful every kindness and attention were shown to me. My invitation I was sensible that I owed entirely to my noble friend. But, *having* been invited, I felt assured, from what passed, that it was meant and provided that I should not, by any possibility, be suffered to think myself overlooked. Lord Westport and I communicated our thoughts occasionally by means of a language, which we, in those days, found useful enough at times, and which bore the name of *Ziph*. The language and the name were both derived (that is, were *immediately* so derived, for *remotely* the *Ziph* language may ascend to Nineveh) from Winchester. Dr. Mapleton, a physician in Bath, who attended me in concert with Mr. Grant, an eminent surgeon, during the non-descript malady of the head, happened to have had three sons at Winchester, and his reason for removing them is worth mentioning, as it illustrates the well-known system of *fagging*. One or more of them showed to the quick medical eye of Dr. Mapleton symptoms of declining health, and, upon cross-questioning, he found that, being (as juniors) *fags* (that is bondsmen by old prescription) to appointed seniors, they were under the necessity of going out nightly into the town for the purpose of executing commissions; but this was not easy, as all the regular outlets were closed at an early hour. In such a dilemma, any route, that was barely practicable at whatever risk, must be traversed by the loyal *fag*: and it so happened that none of any kind remained open or accessible, except one; and this one com-

munication happened to have escaped suspicion, simply because it lay through a succession of temples and sewers sacred to the goddesses Cloacina and Scavengerina. That of itself was not so extraordinary a fact · the wonder lay in the number—viz., seventeen. Such were the actual amount of sacred edifices which, through all their dust, and garbage, and mephitic morasses, these miserable vasals had to thread all but every night of the week. Dr. Mapleton, when he had made this discovery, ceased to wonder at the medical symptoms; and, as *faggery* was an abuse too venerable and sacred to be touched by profane hands, he lodged no idle complaints, but simply removed his sons to a school where the Serbonian bogs of the subterraneous goddess might not interest the nocturnal line of march so *very* often. One day, during the worst of my illness, when the kind-hearted doctor was attempting to amuse me with this anecdote, and asking me whether I thought Hannibal would have attempted his march over the Little St Bernard, supposing that he and the elephant which he rode had been summoned to explore a route through seventeen similar nuisances, he went on to mention the one sole accomplishment which his sons had imported from Winchester. This was the *Ziph* language, communicated at Winchester to any aspirant for a fixed fee of one-half guinea, but which the doctor then communicated to me—as I do now to the reader—*gratis*. I make a present of this language without fee, or price, or entrance-money, to my honoured reader; and let him understand that it is undoubtedly a bequest of elder times. Perhaps it may be co-eval with the Pyramids. For in the famous “Essay on a Philosophical Character” (I forget whether *that* is the exact title), a large folio written by the ingenious Dr. Wilkins, bishop of

Chester,\* and published early in the reign of Charles II, a folio which I, in youthful days, not only read but studied, this language is recorded and accurately described amongst many other modes of cryptical communication, oral and visual, spoken, written, or symbolic. And, as the bishop does not speak of it as at all a recent invention, it may probably at that time have been regarded as an antique device for conducting a conversation in secrecy amongst bystanders; and this advantage it has, that it is applicable to all languages alike, nor can it possibly be penetrated by one not initiated in the mystery. The secret is this (and the grandeur of simplicity at any rate it has)—repeat the vowel or diphthong of every syllable, prefixing to the vowel so repeated the letter G. Thus, for example —Shall we go away in an hour? Three hours we have already staid. This in Zaph becomes —*Shagall wege gogo agawagay iqin agan hougour? Threeget hougours wege haqare aqulreagudygy stagaid*†. It must not be supposed that Zaph proceeds slowly. A very little practice gives the greatest fluency, so that even now, though certainly I cannot have practised it for fifty years, my power of speaking the Zaph remains unimpaired. I forget whether in the Bishop of Chester's account of this cryptical language the consonant intercalated be G or not. Evidently any consonant intercalated will answer the purpose. F or L would be softer, and so far better.

\* This Dr. Wilkins was related by marriage to Cromwell, and is better known to the world perhaps, by his Essay on the possibility of a passage (or, as the famous author of the "Pursuits of Literature" said, by way of an Episcopal metaphor, the possibility of a translation) to the moon.

† One omission occurs to me on reviewing this account of the Zaph, which is—that I should have directed the accent to be placed on the intercalated syllable thus, *ship* becomes *shigip*, with the emphasis on *qip* *run* becomes *rugun*, &c.



In this learned tongue it was that my friend and I communicated our feelings, and, having staid nearly four hours, a time quite sufficient to express a proper sense of the honour, we departed; and, on emerging into the open high road, we threw up our hats and huzzaed, meaning no sort of disrespect, but from uncontrollable pleasure in recovered liberty.

Soon after this we left Eton for Ireland. Our first destination being Dublin, of course we went by Holyhead. The route at that time, from Southern England to Dublin, did not (as in elder and in later days) go round by Chester. A few miles after leaving Shrewsbury, somewhere about Oswestry, it entered North Wales; a stage farther brought us to the celebrated vale of Llangollen; and, on reaching the approach to this about sunset on a beautiful evening of June, I first found myself amongst the mountains, a feature in natmal scenery for which, from my earliest days, it was not extravagant to say that I had hungered and thirsted. In no one expectation of my life have I been less disappointed; and I may add, that no one enjoyment has less decayed or palled upon my continued experience. A mountainous region, with a slender population, and *that* of a simple pastoral character; behold my chief conditions of a pleasant permanent dwelling-place! But, thus far I have altered, that *now* I should greatly prefer forest scenery—such as the New Forest, or the Forest of Dean in Gloucestershire. The mountains of Wales range at about the same elevation as those of Northern England; three thousand and four to six hundred feet being the extreme limit which they reach. Generally speaking, their forms are less picturesque individually, and they are less happily grouped than their *English* brethren. I have since

also been made sensible by Wordsworth of one grievous defect in the structure of the Welsh valleys; too generally they take the *basin* shape—the level area at their foot does not detach itself with sufficient precision from the declivities that surround them. Of this, however, I was not aware at the time of first seeing Wales, although the striking effect from the *opposite* form of the Cumberland and Westmoreland valleys, which almost universally present a flat area at the base of the surrounding hills, level, to use Wordsworth's expression, "*as the floor of a temple*," would, at any rate, have arrested my eye, as a circumstance of impressive beauty, even though the want of such a feature might not, in any case, have affected me as a fault. As something that had a positive value, this characteristic of the Cumbrian valleys had fixed my attention, but not as any telling point of contrast against the Cambrian valleys. No faults, however, at that early age disturbed my pleasure, except that after one whole day's travelling (for so long it cost us between Llangollen and Holyhead), the want of water struck me upon review as painfully remarkable. From Conway to Bangor (seventeen miles) we were often in sight of the sea, but fresh water we had seen hardly any, no lake, no stream much beyond a brook. This is certainly a conspicuous defect in North Wales, considered as a region of fine scenery. The few lakes I have since become acquainted with, as that near Bala, near Beddgelert, and beyond Machynlleth, are not attractive either in their forms or in their accompaniments: the Bala Lake being meagre and insipid: the others as it were unfinished, and unaccompanied with their furniture of wood.

At the *Head* (to call it by its common colloquial name), we were detained a few days in those unsteam-

ing times by foul winds. Our time, however, thanks to the hospitality of a certain Captain Skinner on that station, did not hang heavy on our hands, though we were imprisoned, as it were, on a dull rock; for Holyhead itself is a little island of rock, an insulated dependency of North Wales. The packets on this station were at that time lucrative commands; and they were given (perhaps, *are\** given?) to post-captains in the navy. Captain Skinner was celebrated for his convivial talents; he did the honours of the place in a hospitable style; daily asked us to dine with him, and seemed as inexhaustible in his wit as in his hospitality.

This answered one purpose, at least, of special convenience to our party at that moment: it kept us from all necessity of meeting each other during the day, except under circumstances where we escaped the necessity of any familiar communication. Why that should have become desirable, arose upon the following mysterious change of relations between ourselves and the Rev Mr. Gr——, Lord Westport's tutor. On the last day of our journey, Mr. G., who had accompanied us thus far, but now at Holyhead was to leave us, suddenly took offence (or, at least, then first *showed* his offence) at something we had said, done, or omitted, and never spoke one syllable to either of us again. Being both of us amiably disposed, and incapable of having seriously meditated either word or deed likely to wound any person's feelings, we were much hurt at the time, and often retraced the little incidents upon the road, to discover, if possible, what it was that had laid us open to misconstruction. But it remained to both of us a lasting mystery. This tutor was an Irishman, of Trinity College, Dublin;

\* Written twenty years ago.

and, I believe, of considerable pretensions as a scholar, but, being reserved and haughty, or else presuming in us a knowledge of our offence, which we really had not, he gave us no opening for any explanation. To the last moment, however, he manifested a punctilious regard to the duties of his charge. He accompanied us in our boat, on a dark and gusty night, to the packet, which lay a little out at sea. He saw us on board; and then, standing up for one moment, he said, "Is all right on deck?"—"All right, sir," sang out the ship's steward—"Have you, Lord Westport, got your boat-cloak with you?"—"Yes, sir."—"Then, pull away, boatmen." We listened for a time to the measured beat of his retreating oars, marvelling more and more at the atrocious nature of our crime which could thus avail to intercept even his last adieus. I, for my part, never saw him again, nor, as I have reason to think, did Lord Westport. Neither did we ever unravel the mystery.

As if to irritate our curiosity still more, Lord Westport showed me a torn fragment of paper in his tutor's handwriting, which, together with others, had been thrown (as he believed) purposely in his way. If he was right in that belief, it appeared that he had missed the particular fragment which was designed to raise the veil upon our guilt, for the one he produced contained exactly these words—"With respect to your ladyship's anxiety to know how far the acquaintance with Mr. de Q. is likely to be of service to your son, I think I may now venture to say that"—There the sibylline fragment ended; nor could we torture it into any further revelation. However, both of us saw the propriety of not ourselves practising any mystery, nor giving any advantage to Mr. G. by imperfect communications; and accordingly, on the day

after we reached Dublin, we addressed a circumstantial account of our journey and our little mystery to Lady Altamont in England; for to her, it was clear that the tutor had confided his mysterious wrongs. Her ladyship answered with kindness; but did not throw any light on the problem which exercised at once our memories, our skill in conjectural interpretation, and our sincere regrets. Lord Westport and I regretted much that there had not been a wider margin attached to the fragment of Mr. G.'s letter to Lady Altamont; in which case, as I could readily have mimicked his style of writing, it would have been easy for me to fill up thus—"With respect to your ladyship's anxiety, &c., I think I may now venture to say that, if the solar system were searched there could not be found a companion more serviceable to your son than Mr. de Q. He speaks the Ziph most beautifully. He writes it, I am told, classically. And if there were a Ziph nation as well as a Ziph language, I am satisfied that he would very soon be at the head of it; as he already is, beyond all competition, at the head of the Ziph literature." Lady Altamont, on receiving this, would infallibly have supposed him mad; she would have written so to all her Irish friends, and would have commended the poor gentleman to the care of his nearest kinsmen; and thus we should have had some little indemnification for the annoyance he had caused us. I mention this trifle, simply because, trifle as it is, it involved a mystery, and furnishes an occasion for glancing at that topic. Mysteries as deep, with results a little more important and foundations a little sounder, have many times crossed me in life; one, for instance, I recollect at this moment, known pretty extensively to the neighbourhood in which it occurred. It was in the country of S— A lady

married, and married well, as was thought. About twelve months afterwards, she returned alone in a post-chaise to her father's house; paid, and herself dismissed, the postilion at the gate; entered the house; ascended to the room in which she had passed her youth, and known in the family by her name; took possession of it again; intimated by signs, and by one short letter at her first arrival, what she would require; lived for nearly twenty years in this state of *La Trappe* seclusion and silence; nor ever, to the hour of her death, explained what circumstances had dissolved the supposed happy connection she had formed, or what had become of her husband. Her looks and gestures were of a nature to repress all questions in the spirit of mere curiosity, and the spirit of affection naturally respected a secret which was guarded so severely. This might be supposed a Spanish tale; yet it happened in England, and in a pretty populous neighbourhood. The romances which occur in real life are too often connected with circumstances of criminality in some one among the parties concerned; on that account, more than any other, they are often suppressed; else, judging by the number which have fallen within my own knowledge, they must be of more frequent occurrence than is usually supposed. Among such romances, those cases, perhaps, form an unusual proportion in which young, innocent, and high-minded persons have made a sudden discovery of some great profligacy or deep unworthiness in the person to whom they had surrendered their entire affections. That shock, more than any other, is capable of blighting, in one hour, the whole after existence, and sometimes of at once overthrowing the balance of life or of reason. Instances I have known of both; and such afflictions are the less open to any alleviation, that sometimes

they are of a nature so delicate as to preclude all confidential communication of them to another; and sometimes it would be even dangerous, in a legal sense, to communicate them.

A sort of adventure occurred, and not of a kind pleasant to recall, even on this short voyage. The passage to Dublin from the Head is about sixty miles, I believe; yet, from baffling winds, it cost us upwards of thirty hours. On the second day, going upon deck, we found that our only fellow-passenger of note was a woman of rank, celebrated for her beauty; and not undeservedly; for a lovely creature she was. The body of her travelling coach had been, as usual, unslung from the "carriage" (by which is technically meant the wheels and the perch), and placed upon deck. This she used as a place of retreat from the sun during the day, and as a resting-place at night. For want of more interesting companions, she invited us, during the day, into her coach; and we taxed our abilities to make ourselves as entertaining as we could; for we were greatly fascinated by the lady's beauty. The second night proved very sultry; and Lord Westport and myself, suffering from the oppression of the cabin, left our berths, and lay, wrapped up in cloaks, upon deck. Having talked for some hours, we were both on the point of falling asleep, when a stealthy tread near our heads awoke us. It was starlight; and we traced between ourselves and the sky the outline of a man's figure. Lying upon a mass of tarpaulins, we were ourselves undistinguishable, and the figure moved in the direction of the coach. Our first thought was to raise an alarm, scarcely doubting that the purpose of the man was to rob the unprotected lady of her watch or purse. But, to our astonishment, we saw the coach-door silently swing open under a touch

from *within*. All was as silent as a dream ; the figure entered, the door closed, and we were left to interpret the case as we might. Strange it was that this lady could permit herself to calculate upon absolute concealment in such circumstances. We recollected afterwards to have heard some indistinct rumour buzzed about the packet on the day pieceding, that a gentleman, and some even spoke of him by name as a Colonel —, for some unknown purpose, was concealed in the steerage of the packet. And other appearances indicated that the affair was not entirely a secret even amongst the lady's servants. To both of us the story proclaimed a moral already sufficiently current, viz , that women of the highest and the very lowest rank are alike thrown too much into situations of danger and temptation. I might mention some additional circumstances of criminal aggravation in this lady's case ; but, as they would tend to point out the real person to those acquainted with her history, I shall forbear. She has since made a noise in the world, and has maintained, I believe, a tolerably fair reputation. Soon after sunrise the next morning, a heavenly morning of June, we dropt our anchor in the famous bay of Dublin. There was a dead calm : the sea was like a lake ; and, as we were some miles from the Pigeon-House, a boat was manned to put us on shore. The lovely lady, unaware that we were parties to her guilty secret, went with us, accompanied by her numerous attendants, and looking as beautiful, and hardly less innocent, than an angel. Long afterwards, Lord Westport and I met her, hanging upon the arm of her husband, a manly and good-natured man, of polished manners, to whom she introduced us. for she voluntarily challenged us as her fellow-voyagers, and, I suppose, had no suspicion which pointed in our



direction. She even joined her husband in cordially pressing us to visit them at their magnificent *chateau*. Upon us, meantime, whatever might be *her* levity, the secret of which accident had put us in possession pressed with a weight of awe; we shuddered at our own discovery; and we both agreed to drop no hint of it in any direction.

Landing about three miles from Dublin (according to my present remembrance at Dunleary), we were not long in reaching Sackville Street.

## A COUNTRY CRICKET-MATCH

MARY RUSSELL MITFORD

I DOUBT if there be any scene in the world more animating or delightful than a cricket-match—I do not mean a set match at Lord's Ground for money, hard money, between a certain number of gentlemen and players, as they are called—people who make a trade of that noble sport, and degrade it into an affair of bettings and hedgings, and cheatings, it may be, like boxing or horse-racing, nor do I mean a pretty *fête* in a gentleman's park, where one club of cricketing dandies encounter another such club, and where they show off in graceful costume to a gay marguee of admiring belles, who condescend so to purchase admiration, and while away a long summer morning in partaking cold collations, conversing occasionally, and seeming to understand the game—the whole being conducted according to ball-room etiquette, so as to be exceedingly elegant and exceedingly dull. No! the cricket that I mean is a real solid old-fashioned match between neighbouring parishes, where each attacks the other for honour and a supper, glory and half-a-crown a man. If there be any gentleman amongst them, it is well—if not, it is so much the better. Your gentleman cricketer is in general rather an anomalous character. Elderly gentlemen are obviously good for nothing; and young beaux are, for the most part, hampered and trammelled by dress and habit; the stiff cravat, the pinched-in waist, the dandy-walk—oh, they will never do for cricket! Now, our country lads, accustomed to the flail or the hammer (your blacksmiths are capital hitters) have the free use

of their arms ; they know how to move their shoulders ; and they can move their feet too—they can run ; then they are so much better made, so much more athletic, and yet so much lissomer—to use a Hampshire phrase, which deserves at least to be good English. Here and there, indeed, one meets with an old Etonian, who retains his boyish love for that game which formed so considerable a branch of his education ; some even preserve their boyish proficiency, but in general it wears away like the Greek, quite as certainly, and almost as fast ; a few years of Oxford, or Cambridge, or the continent, are sufficient to annihilate both the power and the inclination. No ! a village match is the thing—where our highest officer—our conductor (to borrow a musical term) is but a little farmer's second son ; where a day-labourer is our bowler, and a blacksmith our long-stop ; where the spectators consist of the retired cricketers, the veterans of the green, the careful mothers, the girls, and all the boys of two parishes, together with a few amateurs, little above them in rank, and not at all in pretension ; where laughing and shouting, and the very ecstasy of merriment and good-humour prevail : such a match, in short, as I attended yesterday, at the expense of getting twice wet through, and as I would attend to-morrow, at the certainty of having that ducking doubled.

For the last three weeks our village has been in a state of great excitement, occasioned by a challenge from our north-western neighbours, the men of B., to contend with us at cricket. Now, we have not been much in the habit of playing matches. Three or four years ago, indeed, we encountered the men of S., our neighbours south-by-east, with a sort of doubtful success, beating them on our own ground, whilst they,

in the second match returned the compliment on theirs. This discouraged us. Then an unnatural coalition between a high-church curate and an evangelical gentleman-farmer drove our lads from the Sunday-evening practice, which, as it did not begin before both services were concluded, and as it tended to keep the young men from the ale-house, our magistrates had winked at if not encouraged. The sport, therefore, had languished until the present season, when under another change of circumstances the spirit began to revive. Half-a-dozen fine active lads, of influence amongst their comrades, grew into men and yearned for cricket; an enterprising publican gave a set of ribands: his rival, mine host of the Rose, an outdoorer by profession, gave two; and the clergyman and his lay ally, both well-disposed and good-natured men, gratified by the submission to their authority, and finding, perhaps, that no great good resulted from the substitution of public-houses for out-of-door diversions, relaxed. In short, the practice recommenced, and the hill was again alive with men and boys, and innocent merriment; but farther than the riband matches amongst ourselves nobody dreamed of going, till this challenge—we were modest, and doubted our own strength. The B. people, on the other hand, must have been braggers born, a whole parish of gasconaders. Never was such boasting! such crowing! such ostentatious display of practice! such mutual compliments from man to man—bowler to batter, batter to bowler! It was a wonder they did not challenge all England. It must be confessed that we were a little astounded; yet we firmly resolved not to decline the combat; and one of the most spirited of the new growth, William Grey by name, took up the glove in a style of manly courtesy, that would have

done honour to a knight in the days of chivalry.—“ We were not professed players,” he said, “ being little better than school-boys, and scarcely older ; but, since they had done us the honour to challenge us, we would try our strength. It would be no discredit to be beaten by such a field.”

Having accepted the wager of battle, our champion began forthwith to collect his forces. William Grey is himself one of the finest youths that one shall see—tall, active, slender and yet strong, with a piercing eye full of sagacity, and a smile full of good humour—a farmer’s son by station, and used to hard work as farmers’ sons are now, liked by everybody, and admitted to be an excellent cricketer. He immediately set forth to muster his men, remembering with great complacency that Samuel Long, a bowler *comme il y en a peu*, the very man who had knocked down nine wickets, had beaten us, bowled us out at the fatal return match some years ago at S., had luckily, in a remove of a quarter of a mile last Lady-day, crossed the boundaries of his old parish, and actually belonged to us. Here was a stroke of good fortune! Our captain applied to him instantly; and he agreed at a word. Indeed, Samuel Long is a very civilised person. He is a middle-aged man who looks rather old amongst our young lads, and whose thickness and breadth give no token of remarkable activity; but he is very active, and so steady a player! so safe! We had half gained the match when we had secured him. He is a man of substance, too, in every way; owns one cow, two donkeys, six pigs, and geese and ducks beyond count—dresses like a farmer, and owes no man a shilling—and all this from pure industry, sheer day-labour. Note that your good cricketer is commonly the most industrious man in the parish; the habits

that make him such are precisely those which make a good workman—steadiness, sobriety, and activity—Samuel Long might pass for the *beau idéal* of the two characters. Happy were we to possess him! Then we had another piece of good luck. James Brown, a journeyman blacksmith and a native, who, being of a rambling disposition, had roamed from place to place for half-a-dozen years, had just returned to settle with his brother at another corner of our village, bringing with him a prodigious reputation in cricket and in gallantry—the gay Lothario of the neighbourhood. He is said to have made more conquests in love and in cricket than any blacksmith in the county. To him also went the indefatigable William Grey, and he also consented to play. No end to our good fortune! Another celebrated batter, called Joseph Hearne, had likewise recently married into the parish. He worked, it is true, at the A. mills, but slept at the house of his wife's father in our territories. He also was sought and found by our leader. But he was grand and shy; made an immense favour of the thing; courted counting and then hung back—"Did not know that he could be spared, had partly resolved not to play again—at least not this season; thought it rash to accept the challenge; thought they might do without him——" "Truly I think so too," said our spirited champion, "we will not trouble you, Mr Hearne."

Having thus secured two powerful auxiliaries, and rejected a third, we began to reckon and select the regular native forces. Thus ran our list: William Gréy, 1; Samuel Long, 2; James Brown, 3; George and John Simmons, one capital, the other so-so—an uncertain hitter, but a good fieldsman, 5; Joel Brent, excellent, 6, Ben Appleton—here was a little pause—

Ben's abilities at cricket were not completely ascertained; but then he was so good a fellow, so full of fun and waggyery! no doing without Ben. So he figured in the list, 7; George Harris—a short halt there too! Slowish—slow but sure. I think the proverb brought him in, 8; Tom Coper—oh, beyond the world, Tom Coper! the red-headed gardening lad, whose left-handed strokes send *her* (a cricket-ball, like that other moving thing, a ship, is always of the feminine gender), send her spinning a mile, 9; Harry Willis, another blacksmith, 10

We had now ten of our eleven, but the choice of the last occasioned some demur. Three young Martins, rich farmers of the neighbourhood, successively presented themselves, and were all rejected by our independent and impartial general for want of merit—*cricketal* merit. “Not good enough,” was his pithy answer. Then our worthy neighbour the half-pay lieutenant, offered his services—he, too, though with some hesitation and modesty, was refused—“Not quite young enough” was his sentence. John Strong, the exceeding long son of our dwarfish mason, was the next candidate—a nice youth—everybody likes John Strong—and a willing, but so tall and so limp, bent in the middle—a thread-paper, six-feet high! We were all afraid that, in spite of his name, his strength would never hold out. “Wait till next year, John,” quoth William Grey, with all the dignified seniority of twenty speaking to eighteen. “Coper’s a year younger,” said John. “Coper’s a foot shorter,” replied William: so John retired: and the eleventh man remained unchosen, almost to the eleventh hour. The eve of the match arrived, and the post was still vacant, when a little boy of fifteen, David, Willis, brother to Harry, admitted by accident

to the last practice, saw eight of them out, and was voted in by acclamation.

That Sunday evening's practice (for Monday was the important day) was a period of great anxiety, and, to say the truth, of great pleasure. There is something strangely delightful in the innocent spirit of party. To be one of a numerous body, to be authorised to say *we*, to have a rightful interest in triumph or defeat, is gratifying at once to social feeling and to personal pride. There was not a ten-year-old urchin or a septuagenary woman in the parish who did not feel an additional importance, a reflected consequence, in speaking of "our side." An election interests in the same way, but that feeling is less pure. Money is there, and hatred, and politics, and lies. Oh, to be a voter, or a voter's wife, comes nothing near the genuine and hearty sympathy of belonging to a parish, breathing the same air, looking on the same trees, listening to the same nightingales! Talk of a patriotic elector! Give me a parochial patriot, a man who loves his parish! Even we, the female partisans, may partake the common ardour. I am sure I did. I never, though tolerably eager and enthusiastic at all times, remember being in a more delicious state of excitement than on the eve of that battle. Our hopes waxed stronger and stronger. Those of our players who were present were excellent. William Grey got forty notches off his own bat; and that brilliant hitter, Tom Coper, gained eight from two successive balls. As the evening advanced, too, we had encouragement of another sort. A spy, who had been despatched to reconnoitre the enemy's quarters, returned from their practising ground with a most consolatory report. "Really," said Charles Grover, our intelligence—a fine old steady judge, one who had played well in his



day—"they are no better than so many old women. Any five of ours would beat their eleven." This sent us to bed in high spirits.

Morning dawned less favourably. The sky promised a series of deluging showers, and kept its word as English skies are wont to do on such occasions; and a lamentable message arrived at the headquarters from our trusty comrade, Joel Brent. His master, a great farmer, had begun the hay-harvest that very morning, and Joel, being as eminent in one field as in another, could not be spared. Imagine Joel's plight! the most ardent of all our eleven! a knight held back from the tourney! a soldier from the battle! The poor swain was inconsolable. At last, one who is always ready to do a good-natured action, great or little, set forth to back his petition and, by dint of appealing to the public spirit of our worthy neighbour and the state of the barometer, talking alternately of the parish honour and thunder-showers, of lost matches and sopped hay, he carried his point, and returned triumphantly with the delighted Joel.

In the meantime we became sensible of another defalcation. On calling over our roll, Brown was missing; and the spy of the preceding night, Charles Grover—the universal scout and messenger of the village, a man who will run half-a-dozen miles for a pint of beer, who does errands for the very love of the trade, who, if he had been a lord, would have been an ambassador—was instantly despatched to summon the truant. His report spread general consternation. Brown had set off at four o'clock in the morning to play in a cricket-match at M., a little town twelve miles off, which had been his last residence. Here was desertion! Here was treachery! Here was treachery against that goodly state, our parish! To

send James Brown to Coventry was the immediate resolution; but even that seemed too light a punishment for such delinquency. Then how we cried him down! At ten on Sunday night (for the rascal had actually practised with us, and never said a word of his intended disloyalty) he was our faithful mate, and the best player (take him for all in all) of the eleven. At ten in the morning he had run away, and we were well rid of him, he was no batter compared with Wilham Grey or Tom Coper; not fit to wipe the shoes of Samuel Long, as a bowler, nothing of a scout to John Simmons; the boy David Willis was worth fifty of him:

I trust we have within our realm,  
Five hundred good as he,

was the universal sentiment. So we took tall John Strong, who, with an incurable hankering after the honour of being admitted, had kept constantly with the players, to take the chance of some such accident—we took John for our *pis-aller*. I never saw any one prouder than the good-humoured lad was of this not very flattering piece of preferment

John Strong was elected, and Brown sent to Coventry, and when I first heard of his delinquency, I thought the punishment only too mild for the crime. But I have since learned the secret history of the offence (if we could know the secret histories of all offences, how much better the world would seem than it does now!) and really my wrath is much abated. It was a piece of gallantry, of devotion to the sex, or rather a chivalrous obedience to one chosen fair. I must tell my readers the story. Mary Allen, the prettiest girl of M, had, it seems, revenged upon our blacksmith the numberless inconsistencies of which he stood accused. He was in love over head and ears.

but the nymph was cruel. She said no, and no, and no, and poor Brown, three times rejected, at last resolved to leave the place, partly in despair, and partly in that hope which often mingles strangely with a lover's despair, the hope that when he was gone he should be missed. He came home to his brother's accordingly; but for five weeks he heard nothing from or of the inexorable Mary, and was glad to beguile his own "vexing thoughts" by endeavouring to create in his mind an artificial and factitious interest in our cricket-match—all unimportant as such a trifle must have seemed to a man in love. Poor James, however, is a social and warm-hearted person, not likely to resist a contagious sympathy. As the time for the play advanced, the interest which he had at first affected became genuine and sincere; and he was really, when he left the ground on Sunday night, almost as enthusiastically absorbed in the event of the next day as Joel Brent himself. He little foresaw the new and delightful interest which awaited him at home, where, on the moment of his arrival, his sister-in-law and confidante presented him with a billet from the lady of his heart. It had, with the usual delay of letters sent by private hands in that rank of life, loitered on the road, in a degree inconceivable to those who are accustomed to the punctual speed of the post, and had taken ten days for its twelve miles' journey. Have my readers any wish to see this *billet-doux*? I can show them (but in strict confidence) a literal copy. It was addressed,

For mistur jem browne  
blaxmith by S.

The inside ran thus .

Mistur browne this is to Inform yew that oure parish plays bramley men next monday is a week, i think we shall lose without yew, from your humbell servant to command

MARY ALLEN

Was there ever a prettier relenting? a summons more flattering, more delicate, more irresistible? The precious epistle was undated, but, having ascertained who brought it, and found, by cross-examining the messenger, that the Monday in question was the very next day, we were not surprised to find that "Mistur browne" forgot his engagement to us, forgot all but Mary and Mary's letter, and set off at four o'clock the next morning to walk twelve miles, and play for her parish, and in her sight. Really we must not send James Brown to Coventry—must we? Though if, as his sister-in-law tells our damsel Harriet he hopes to do, he should bring the fair Mary home as his bride, he will not greatly care how little we say to him. But he must not be sent to Coventry—True-love forbid!

At last we were all assembled, and marched down to H common, the appointed ground, which, though in our dominions according to the map, was the constant practising place of our opponents, and *terra incognita* to us. We found our adversaries on the ground as we expected, for our various delays had hindered us from taking the field so early as we wished; and, as soon as we had settled all preliminaries, the match began.

But, alas! I have been so long settling my preliminaries, that I have left myself no room for the detail of our victory, and must squeeze the account of our grand achievements into as little compass as Cowley, when he crammed the names of eleven of his mistresses into the narrow space of four eight-syllable lines. *They* began the warfare—those boastful men of B. And what think you, gentle reader, was the amount of their innings? These challengers—the famous eleven—how many did they get? Think! imagine! guess!—You cannot?—Well!—they got twenty-two, or,

rather, they got twenty; for two of theirs were short notches, and would never have been allowed, only that, seeing what they were made of, we and our umpires were not particular.—They should have had twenty more if they had chosen to claim them. Oh, how well we fielded! and how well we bowled! our good play had quite as much to do with their miserable failure as their bad. Samuel Long is a slow bowler, George Simmons a fast one, and the change from Long's lobbing to Simmons's fast balls posed them completely. Poor simpletons! they were always wrong, expecting the slow for the quick, and the quick for the slow. Well, we went in. And what were our innings? Guess again!—guess! A hundred and sixty-nine! in spite of soaking showers, and wretched ground, where the ball would not run a yard, we headed them by a hundred and forty-seven; and then they gave in, as well they might. William Grey pressed them much to try another innings. "There was so much chance," as he courteously observed, "in cricket, that advantageous as our position seemed, we might, very possibly, be overtaken. The B. men had better try." But they were beaten sulky, and would not move—to my great disappointment; I wanted to prolong the pleasure of success. What a glorious sensation it is to be for five hours together winning—winning—winning! always feeling what a whist-player feels when he takes up four honours, seven trumps! Who would think that a little bit of leather, and two pieces of wood, had such a delightful and delighting power!

The only drawback on my enjoyment was the failure of the pretty boy, David Willis, who, injudiciously put in first, and playing for the first time in a match amongst men and strangers, who talked to him, and

stared at him, was seized with such a fit of shame-faced shyness, that he could scarcely hold his bat, and was bowled out without a stroke, from actual nervousness. "He will come off that," Tom Coper says—I am afraid he will. I wonder whether Tom had ever any modesty to lose. Our other modest lad, John Strong, did very well; his length told in fielding, and he got good fame. Joel Brent, the rescued mower, got into a scrape, and out of it again; his fortune for the day. He ran out his mate, Samuel Long; who, I do believe, but for the excess of Joel's eagerness, would have stayed in till this time, by which exploit he got into sad disgrace, and then he himself got thirty-seven runs, which redeemed his reputation. William Grey made a hit which actually lost the cricket-ball. We think she lodged in a hedge, a quarter of a mile off, but nobody could find her. And George Simmons had nearly lost his shoe, which he tossed away in a passion, for having been caught out, owing to the ball glancing against it. These, together with a very complete somerset of Ben Appleton, our long-stop, who floundered about in the mud, making faces and attitudes as laughable as Grimaldi, none could tell whether by accident or design, were the chief incidents of the scene of action. Amongst the spectators nothing remarkable occurred, beyond the general calamity of two or three drenchings, except that a form, placed by the side of a hedge, under a very insufficient shelter, was knocked into the ditch, in a sudden rush of the cricketers to escape a pelting shower, by which means all parties shared the fate of Ben Appleton, some on land and some by water; and that, amidst the scramble, a saucy gipsy of a girl contrived to steal from the knee of the demure and well-apparelled Samuel Long, a smart handkerchief which

his careful dame had tied round it to preserve his new (what is the mincing feminine word?)—his new—in-expressibles; thus reversing the story of Desdemona, and causing the new Othello to call aloud for his handkerchief, to the great diversion of the company. And so we parted; the players retired to their supper, and we to our homes; all wet through, all good-humoured and all happy—except the losers.

To-day we are happy too. Hats, with ribands in them, go glancing up and down; and William Grey says, with a proud humility, “ We do not challenge any parish; but if we be challenged, we are ready ”

## LITERATURE

JOHN HENRY NEWMAN.

1858

WISHING to address you, Gentlemen, at the commencement of a new Session, I tried to find a subject for discussion, which might be at once suitable to the occasion, yet neither too large for your time, nor too minute or abstruse for your attention. I think I see one for my purpose in the very title of your Faculty. It is the Faculty of Philosophy and Letters. Now the question may arise as to what is meant by 'Philosophy,' and what is meant by 'Letters.' As to the other Faculties, the subject-matter which they profess is intelligible, as soon as named, and beyond all dispute. We know what Science is, what Medicine, what Law, and what Theology; but we have not so much ease in determining what is meant by Philosophy and Letters. Each department of that twofold province needs explanation: it will be sufficient, on an occasion like this, to investigate one of them. Accordingly I shall select for remark the latter of the two, and attempt to determine what we are to understand by Letters or Literature, in what Literature consists, and how it stands relatively to Science. We speak, for instance, of ancient and modern literature, the literature of the day, sacred literature, light literature, and our lectures in this place are devoted to classical literature and English literature. Are Letters, then, synonymous with books? This cannot be, or they would include in



their range Philosophy, Law, and, in short, the teaching of all the other Faculties. Far from confusing these various studies, we view the works of Plato or Cicero sometimes as philosophy, sometimes as literature; on the other hand, no one would ever be tempted to speak of Euclid as literature, or of Matthiæ's Greek Grammar. Is, then, literature synonymous with composition? with books written with an attention to style? is literature fine writing? again, is it studied and artificial writing?

There are excellent persons who seem to adopt this last account of Literature as their own idea of it. They depreciate it, as if it were the result of a mere art or trick of words. Professedly indeed, they are aiming at the Greek and Roman classics, but their criticisms have quite as great force against all literature as against any. I think I shall be best able to bring out what I have to say on the subject by examining the statements which they make in defence of their own view of it. They contend then, 1. that fine writing, as exemplified in the Classics, is mainly a matter of conceits, fancies, and prettinesses, decked out in choice words; 2. that this is the proof of it, that the classics will not bear translating;—(and this is why I have said that the real attack is upon literature altogether, not the classical only; for, to speak generally, all literature, modern as well as ancient, lies under this disadvantage. This, however, they will not allow; for they maintain,) 3. that Holy Scripture presents a remarkable contrast to secular writings on this very point, viz., in that Scripture does easily admit of translation, though it is the most sublime and beautiful of all writings.

Now I will begin by stating these three positions in the words of a writer, who is cited by the estimable

Catholics in question as a witness, or rather as an advocate, in their behalf, though he is far from being able in his own person to challenge the respect which is inspired by themselves.

‘There are two sorts of eloquence,’ says this writer, ‘the one indeed scarce deserves the name of it, which consists chiefly in laboured and polished periods, an over-curious and artificial arrangement of figures, tinselled over with a gaudy embellishment of words, which glitter, but convey little or no light to the understanding. This kind of writing is for the most part much affected and admired by the people of weak judgment and vicious taste; but it is a piece of affectation and formality the sacred writers are utter strangers to. It is a vain and boyish eloquence, and, as it has always been esteemed below the great geniuses of all ages, so much more so with respect to those writers who were actuated by the spirit of Infinite Wisdom, and therefore wrote with that force and majesty with which never man writ. The other sort of eloquence is quite the reverse to this and which may be said to be the true characteristic of the Holy Scriptures; where the excellence does not arise from a laboured and far-fetched elocution, but from a surprising mixture of simplicity and majesty, which is a double character, so difficult to be united that it is seldom to be met with in compositions merely human. We see nothing in Holy Writ of affectation and superfluous ornament. Now, it is observable that the most excellent profane authors, whether Greek or Latin, lose most of their graces whenever we find them literally translated. Homer’s famed representation of Jupiter—his cried-up description of a tempest, his relation of Neptune’s shaking the earth and opening it to its centre, his description of Pallas’s horses, with numbers of other long-since

admired passages, flag, and almost vanish away, in the vulgar Latin translation.

Let any one but take the pains to read the common Latin interpretations of Virgil, Theocritus, or even of Pindar, and one may venture to affirm he will be able to trace out but few remains of the graces which charmed him so much in the original. The natural conclusion from hence is, that in the classical authors, the expression, the sweetness of the numbers, occasioned by a musical placing of words, constitute a great part of their beauties; whereas, in the sacred writings, they consist more in the greatness of the things themselves than in the words and expressions. The ideas and conceptions are so great and lofty in their own nature that they necessarily appear magnificent in the most artless dress. Look but into the Bible, and we see them shine through the most simple and literal translations. That glorious description which Moses gives of the creation of the heavens and the earth, which Longinus...was so greatly taken with, has not lost the least whit of its intrinsic worth, and though it has undergone so many translations, yet triumphs over all, and breaks forth with as much force and vehemence as in the original....In the history of Joseph, where Joseph makes himself known, and weeps aloud upon the neck of his dear brother Benjamin, that all the house of Pharaoh heard him, at that instant none of his brethren are introduced as uttering aught, either to express their present joy or palliate their former injuries to him. On all sides there immediately ensues a deep and solemn silence; a silence infinitely more eloquent and expressive than anything else that could have been substituted in its place. Had Thucydides, Herodotus, Livy, or any of the celebrated classical historians, been employed in writing this history, when

they came to this point they would doubtless have exhausted all their fund of eloquence in furnishing Joseph's brethren with laboured and studied harangues, which, however fine they might have been in themselves, would nevertheless have been unnatural, and altogether improper on the occasion '.

This is eloquently written, but it contains, I consider, a mixture of truth and falsehood, which it will be my business to discriminate from each other. Far be it from me to deny the unapproachable grandeur and simplicity of Holy Scripture, but I shall maintain that the classics are, as human compositions, simple and majestic and natural too. I grant that Scripture is concerned with things, but I will not grant that classical literature is simply concerned with words. I grant that human literature is often elaborate, but I will maintain that elaborate composition is not unknown to the writers of Scripture. I grant that human literature cannot easily be translated out of the particular language to which it belongs; but it is not at all the rule that Scripture can easily be translated either;—and now I address myself to my task:—

Here, then, in the first place, I observe, Gentlemen, that Literature, from the derivation of the word, implies writing, not speaking; this, however, arises from the circumstance of the copiousness, variety, and public circulation of the matters of which it consists. What is spoken cannot outrun the range of the speaker's voice, and perishes in the uttering. When words are in demand to express a long course of thought, when they have to be conveyed to the ends of the earth, or perpetuated for the benefit of posterity, they must be written down, that is, reduced to the shape of literature, still, properly speaking, the terms, by which we denote this characteristic gift of man, belong to its

exhibition by means of the voice, not of handwriting. It addresses itself, in its primary idea, to the ear. not to the eye. We call it the power of speech, we call it language, that is, the use of the tongue; and, even when we write, we still keep in mind what was its original instrument, for we use freely such terms in our books as 'saying,' 'speaking,' 'telling,' 'talking,' 'calling'; we use the terms 'phrase-ology' and 'diction'; as if we were still addressing ourselves to the ear.

Now I insist on this, because it shows that speech, and therefore literature, which is its permanent record, is essentially a personal work. It is not some production or result, attained by the partnership of several persons, or by machinery, or by any natural process, but in its very idea it proceeds, and must proceed, from some one given individual. Two persons cannot be the authors of the sounds which strike our ear; and, as they cannot be speaking one and the same speech, neither can they be writing one and the same lecture or discourse,—which must certainly belong to some one person or other, and is the expression of that one person's ideas and feelings,—ideas and feelings personal to himself, though others may have parallel and similar ones,—proper to himself, in the same sense as his voice, his air, his countenance, his carriage, and his action, are personal. In other words, Literature expresses, not objective truth, as it is called, but subjective; not things, but thoughts

Now this doctrine will become clearer by considering another use of words. which does relate to objective truth, or to things; which relates to matters, not personal, not subjective to the individual, but which, even were there no individual man in the whole world to know them or to talk about them, would exist still.

Such objects become the matter of Science, and words indeed are used to express them, but such words are rather symbols than language, and however many we use, and however we may perpetuate them by writing, we never could make any kind of literature out of them, or call them by that name. Such, for instance, would be Euclid's Elements; they relate to truths universal and eternal; they are not mere thoughts, but things: they exist in themselves, not by virtue of our understanding them, not in dependence upon our will, but in what is called the *nature* of things, or at least on conditions external to us. The words, then, in which they are set forth are not language, speech, literature, but rather, as I have said, symbols. And, as a proof of it, you will recollect that it is possible, nay usual, to set forth the propositions of Euclid in algebraical notation, which, as all would admit, has nothing to do with literature. What is true of mathematics is true also of every study, so far forth as it is scientific; it makes use of words as the mere vehicle of things, and is thereby withdrawn from the province of literature. Thus metaphysics, ethics, law, political economy, chemistry, theology, cease to be literature in the same degree as they are capable of a severe scientific treatment. And hence it is that Aristotle's works on the one hand, though at first sight literature, approach in character, at least a great number of them, to mere science; for even though the things which he treats of and exhibits may not always be real and true, yet he treats them as if they were, not as if they were the thoughts of his own mind; that is, he treats them scientifically. On the other hand, Law or Natural History has before now been treated by an author with so much of colouring derived from his own mind as to become a sort of literature; this is especially seen in

the instance of Theology, when it takes the shape of Pulpit Eloquence. It is seen too in historical composition, which becomes a mere specimen of chronology or a chronicle, when divested of the philosophy, the skill, or the party and personal feelings of the particular writer. Science, then, has to do with things, literature with thoughts; science is universal, literature is personal; science uses words merely as symbols, but literature uses language in its full compass, as including phraseology, idiom, style, composition, rhythm, eloquence, and whatever other properties are included in it.

Let us then put aside the scientific use of words, when we are to speak of language and literature. Literature is the personal use or exercise of language. That this is so is further proved from the fact that one author uses it so differently from another. Language itself in its very origination would seem to be traceable to individuals. Their peculiarities have given it its character. We are often able in fact to trace particular phrases or idioms to individuals; we know the history of their rise. Slang surely, as it is called, comes of, and breathes of the personal. The connection between the force of words in particular languages and the habits and sentiments of the nations speaking them has often been pointed out. And, while the many use language as they find it, the man of genius uses it indeed, but subjects it withal to his own purposes, and moulds it according to his own peculiarities. The throng and succession of ideas, thoughts, feelings, imaginations, aspirations, which pass within him, the abstractions, the juxtapositions, the comparisons, the discriminations, the conceptions, which are so original in him, his views of external things, his judgments upon life, manners, and history,

the exercises of his wit, of his humour, of his depth, of his sagacity, all these innumerable and incessant creations, the very pulsation and throbbing of his intellect, does he image forth, to all does he give utterance, in a corresponding language, which is as multiform as this inward mental action itself and analogous to it, the faithful expression of his intense personality, attending on his own inward world of thought as its very shadow : so that we might as well say that one man's shadow is another's as that the style of a really gifted mind can belong to any but himself. It follows him about as a shadow. His thought and feeling are personal, and so his language is personal.

Thought and speech are inseparable from each other. Matter and expression are parts of one : style is a thinking out into language. This is what I have been laying down, and this is literature ; not *things*, not the verbal symbols of things ; not on the other hand mere *words* ; but thoughts expressed in language. Call to mind, Gentlemen, the meaning of the Greek word which expresses this special prerogative of man over the feeble intelligence of the inferior animals. It is called Logos . what does Logos mean ? it stands both for *reason* and for *speech*, and it is difficult to say which it means more properly. It means both at once . why ? because really they cannot be divided,—because they are in a true sense one. When we can separate light and illumination, life and motion, the convex and the concave of a curve, then will it be possible for thought to tread speech under foot, and to hope to do without it—then will it be conceivable that the vigorous and fertile intellect should renounce its own double, its instrument of expression, and the channel of its speculations and emotions.



Critics should consider this view of the subject before they lay down such canons of taste as the writer whose pages I have quoted. Such men as he is consider fine writing to be an *addition from without* to the matter treated of,—a sort of ornament superinduced, or a luxury indulged in, by those who have time and inclination for such vanities. They speak as if *one* man could do the thought, and *another* the style. We read in Persian travels of the way in which young gentlemen go to work in the East, when they would engage in correspondence with those who inspire them with hope or fear. They cannot write one sentence themselves; so they betake themselves to the professional letter-writer. They confide to him the object they have in view. They have a point to gain from a superior, a favour to ask, an evil to deprecate; they have to approach a man in power, or to make court to some beautiful lady. The professional man manufactures words for them, as they are wanted, as a stationer sells them paper, or a schoolmaster might cut their pens. Thought and word are, in their conception, two things, and thus there is a division of labour. The man of thought comes to the man of words; and the man of words, duly instructed in the thought, dips the pen of desire into the ink of devotedness, and proceeds to spread it over the page of desolation. Then the nightingale of affection is heard to warble to the rose of loveliness, while the breeze of anxiety plays around the brow of expectation. This is what the Easterns are said to consider fine writing; and it seems pretty much the idea of the school of critics to whom I have been referring.

We have an instance in literary history of this very proceeding nearer home, in a great University, in the latter years of the last century. I have referred to it

before now in a public lecture elsewhere ; but it is too much in point here to be omitted. A learned Arabic scholar had to deliver a set of lectures before its doctors and professors on an historical subject in which his reading had lain. A linguist is conversant with science rather than with literature ; but this gentleman felt that his lectures must not be without a style. Being of the opinion of the Orientals, with whose writings he was familiar, he determined to buy a style. He took the step of engaging a person, at a price, to turn the matter which he had got together into ornamental English. Observe, he did not wish for mere grammatical English, but for an elaborate, pretentious style. An artist was found in the person of a country curate, and the job was carried out. His lectures remain to this day, in their own place in the protracted series of annual Discourses to which they belong, distinguished amid a number of heavyish compositions by the rhetorical and ambitious diction for which he went into the market. Thus learned divine, indeed, and the author I have quoted, differ from each other in the estimate they respectively form of literary composition, but they agree together in this,—in considering such composition a trick and a trade ; they put it on a par with the gold plate and the flowers and the music of a banquet, which do not make the viands better, but the entertainment more pleasurable ; as if language were the hired servant, the mere mistress of the reason, and not the lawful wife in her own house.

But can they really think that Homer, or Pindar, or Shakespeare, or Dryden, or Walter Scott, were accustomed to aim at diction for its own sake, instead of being inspired with their subject, and pouring forth beautiful words because they had beautiful thoughts? this is surely too great a paradox to

Cicero has nothing more redundant in any part of his writings than these passages from Shakespeare. No lover then at least of Shakespeare may fairly accuse Cicero of gorgeousness of phraseology or diffuseness of style. Nor will any sound critic be tempted to do so. As a certain unaffected neatness and propriety and grace of diction may be required of any author who lays claim to be a classic, for the same reason that a certain attention to dress is expected of every gentleman, so to Cicero may be allowed the privilege of the *os magna sonaturum*, of which the ancient critic speaks. His copious, majestic, musical flow of language, even if sometimes beyond what the subject-matter demands, is never out of keeping with the occasion or with the speaker. It is the expression of lofty sentiments in lofty sentences, the *mens magna in corpore magno*. It is the development of the inner man. Cicero vividly realised the *status* of a Roman senator and statesman, and the 'pride of place' of Rome, in all the grace and grandeur which attached to her; and he imbibed, and became, what he admired. As the exploits of Scipio or Pompey are the expression of the greatness in deed, so the language of Cicero is the expression of it in word. And, as the acts of the Roman ruler or soldier represent to us, in a manner special to themselves, the characteristic magnanimity of the lords of the earth, so do the speeches or treatises of her accomplished orator bring it home to our imaginations as no other writing could do. Neither Livy, nor Tacitus, nor Terence, nor Seneca, nor Pliny, nor Quintilian, is an adequate spokesman for the Imperial City. They write Latin; Cicero writes Roman.

You will say that Cicero's language is undeniably studied, but that Shakespeare's is as undeniably

natural and spontaneous; and that this is what is meant, when the Classics are accused of being mere artists of words. Here we are introduced to a further large question, which gives me the opportunity of anticipating a misapprehension of my meaning. I observe then, that not only is that lavish richness of style, which I have noticed in Shakespeare, justifiable on the principles which I have been laying down, but, what is less easy to receive, even elaborateness in composition is no mark of trick or artifice in an author. Undoubtedly the works of the Classics, particularly the Latin, *are* elaborate; they have cost a great deal of time, care and trouble. They have had many rough copies; I grant it. I grant also that there are writers of name, ancient and modern, who really are guilty of the absurdity of making sentences, as the very end of their literary labour. Such was Isocrates; such were some of the sophists; they were set on words, to the neglect of thoughts or things; I cannot defend them. If I must give an English instance of this fault, much as I love and revere the personal character and intellectual vigour of Dr. Johnson, I cannot deny that his style often outruns the sense and the occasion, and is wanting in that simplicity which is the attribute of genius. Still, granting all this, I cannot grant, notwithstanding, that genius never need take pains,—that genius may not improve by practice,—that it never incurs failures, and succeeds the second time,—that it never finishes off at leisure what it has thrown off in the outline at a stroke.

Take the instance of the painter or the sculptor; he has a conception in his mind which he wishes to represent in the medium of his art;—the Madonna and Child, or Innocence, or Fortitude, or some historical character or event. Do you mean to say he does not

study his subject? does he not make sketches? does he not even call them 'studies'? does he not call his workroom a *studio*? is he not ever designing, rejecting, adopting, correcting, perfecting? Are not the first attempts of Michael Angelo and Raffaele extant, in the case of some of their most celebrated compositions? Will any one say that the Apollo Belvidere is not a conception patiently elaborated into its proper perfection? These departments of taste are, according to the received notions of the world, the very province of genius, and yet we call them *arts*; they are the 'Fine Arts.' Why may not that be true of literary composition which is true of painting, sculpture, architecture, and music? Why may not language be wrought as well as the clay of the modeller? why may not words be worked up as well as colours? why should not skill in diction be simply subservient and instrumental to the great prototypal ideas which are the contemplation of a Plato or a Virgil? Our greatest poet tells us,

'The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,  
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,  
And, as imagination bodies forth  
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen  
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing  
A local habitation and a name'

Now, is it wonderful that that pen of his should sometimes be at fault for a while,—that it should pause, write, erase, re-write, amend, complete, before he satisfies himself that his language has done justice to the conceptions which his mind's eye contemplated?

In this point of view, doubtless, many or most writers are elaborate; and those certainly not the least whose style is furthest removed from ornament, being simple and natural, or vehement, or severely business-like and practical. Who so energetic and manly as

Demosthenes? Yet he is said to have transcribed Thucydides many times over in the formation of his style. Who so gracefully natural as Herodotus? yet his very dialect is not his own, but chosen for the sake of the perfection of his narrative. Who exhibits such happy negligence as our own Addison? yet artistic fastidiousness was so notorious in his instance that the report has got abroad, truly or not, that he was too late in his issue of an important state-paper, from his habit of revision and re-composition. Such great authors were working by a model which was before the eyes of their intellect, and they were labouring to say what they had to say, in such a way as would most exactly and suitably express it. It is not wonderful that other authors, whose style is not simple, should be instances of a similar literary diligence. Virgil wished his *Æneid* to be burned, elaborate as is its composition, because he felt it needed more labour still, in order to make it perfect. The historian Gibbon in the last century is another instance in point. You must not suppose I am going to recommend his style for imitation, any more than his principles; but I refer to him as the example of a writer feeling the task which lay before him, feeling that he had to bring out into words for the comprehension of his readers a great and complicated scene, and wishing that those words should be adequate to his undertaking. I think he wrote the first chapter of his *History* three times over; it was not that he corrected or improved the first copy; but he put his first essay, and then his second, aside—he recast his matter, till he had hit the precise exhibition of it which he thought demanded by his subject.

Now in all these instances, I wish you to observe, that what I have admitted about literary workmanship differs from the doctrine which I am opposing in this,

—that the mere dealer in words cares little or nothing for the subject which he is embellishing, but can paint and gild anything whatever to order; whereas the artist, whom I am acknowledging, has his great or rich visions before him, and his only aim is to bring out what he thinks or what he feels in a way adequate to the thing spoken of, and appropriate to the speaker.

The illustration which I have been borrowing from the Fine Arts will enable me to go a step further. I have been showing the connection of the thought with the language in literary composition; and in doing so I have exposed the unphilosophical notion, that the language was an extra which could be dispensed with, and provided to order according to the demand. But I have not yet brought out, what immediately follows from this, and which was the second point which I had to show, viz, that to be capable of easy translation is no test of the excellence of a composition. If I must say what I think, I should lay down, with little hesitation, that the truth was almost the reverse of this doctrine. Nor are many words required to show it. Such a doctrine, as is contained in the passage of the author whom I quoted when I began, goes upon the assumption that one language is just like another language,—that every language has all the ideas, turns of thought, delicacies of expression, figures, associations, abstractions, points of view, which every other language has. Now, as far as regards Science, it is true that all languages are pretty much alike for the purposes of Science; but even in this respect some are more suitable than others, which have to coin words, or to borrow them, in order to express scientific ideas. But if languages are not all equally adapted even to furnish symbols for those universal and eternal truths in which Science consists, how can they reason-

ably be expected to be all equally rich, equally forcible, equally musical, equally exact, equally happy in expressing the idiosyncratic peculiarities of thought; of some original and fertile mind, who has availed himself of one of them? A great author takes his native language, masters it, partly throws himself into it, partly moulds and adapts it, and pours out his multitude of ideas through the variously ramified and delicately minute channels of expression which he has found or framed — does it follow that this his personal presence (as it may be called) can forthwith be transferred to every other language under the sun? Then may we reasonably maintain that Beethoven's piano music is not really beautiful, because it cannot be played on the hurdy-gurdy? Were not this astonishing doctrine maintained by persons far superior to the writer whom I have selected for animadversion, I should find it difficult to be patient under a gratuitous extravagance. It seems that a really great author must admit of translation, and that we have a test of his excellence when he reads to advantage in a foreign language as well as in his own. Then Shakespeare is a genius because he can be translated into German, and not a genius because he cannot be translated into French. Then the multiplication-table is the most gifted of all conceivable compositions, because it loses nothing by translation, and can hardly be said to belong to any one language whatever. Whereas I should rather have conceived that, in proportion as ideas are novel and recondite, they would be difficult to put into words, and that the very fact of their having insinuated themselves into one language would diminish the chance of that happy accident being repeated in another. In the language of savages you can hardly express any idea or act of the intellect at all — is the



tongue of the Hottentot or Esquimaux to be made the measure of the genius of Plato, Pindar, Tacitus, St. Jerome, Dante, or Cervantes?

Let us recur, I say, to the illustration of the Fine Arts. I suppose you can express ideas in painting which you cannot express in sculpture; and the more an artist is of a painter, the less he is likely to be of a sculptor. The more he commits his genius to the methods and conditions of his own art, the less he will be able to throw himself into the circumstances of another. Is the genius of Fra Angelico, of Francia, or of Raffaele disparaged by the fact that he was able to do that in colours which no man that ever lived, which no Angel, could achieve in wood? Each of the Fine Arts has its own subject-matter, from the nature of the case you can do in one what you cannot do in another; you can do in painting what you cannot do in carving; you can do in oils what you cannot do in fresco; you can do in marble what you cannot do in ivory, you can do in wax what you cannot do in bronze. Then, I repeat, applying this to the case of languages, why should not genius be able to do in Greek what it cannot do in Latin? and why are its Greek and Latin works defective because they will not turn into English? That genius, of which we are speaking, did not make English; it did not make all languages, present, past, and future; it did not make the laws of *any* language - why is it to be judged of by that in which it had no part, over which it has no control?

And now we are naturally brought on to our third point, which is on the characteristics of Holy Scripture as compared with profane literature. Hitherto we have been concerned with the doctrine of these writers, viz. that style is an *extra*, that it is a mere artifice,

and that hence it cannot be translated ; now we come to their fact, viz. that Scripture has no such artificial style, and that Scripture can easily be translated Surely their fact is as untenable as their doctrine

Scripture easy of translation ! then why have there been so few good translators ? why is it that there has been such great difficulty in combining the two necessary qualities, fidelity to the original and purity in the adopted vernacular ? why is it that the authorized versions of the Church are often so inferior to the original as compositions, except that the Church is bound above all things to see that the version is doctrinally correct, and in a difficult problem is obliged to put up with defects in what is of secondary importance, provided she secure what is of first ? If it were so easy to transfer the beauty of the original to the copy, she would not have been content with her received version in various languages which could be named

And then in the next place, Scripture not elaborate ! Scripture not ornamented in diction, and musical in cadence ! Why, consider the Epistle to the Hebrews—where is there in the classics any composition more carefully, more artificially written ? Consider the book of Job—is it not a sacred drama, as artistic, as perfect, as any Greek tragedy of Sophocles or Euripides ? Consider the Psalter—are there no ornaments, no rhythm, no studied cadences, no responsive members, in that divinely beautiful book ? And is it not hard to understand ? are not the Prophets hard to understand ? is not St. Paul hard to understand ? Who can say that these are popular compositions ? who can say that they are level at first reading with the understandings of the multitude ?

That there are portions indeed of the inspired volume more simple both in style and in meaning, and that these are the more sacred and sublime passages, as, for instance, parts of the Gospel, I grant at once; but this does not militate against the doctrine I have been laying down. Recollect, Gentlemen, my distinction when I began. I have said Literature is one thing, and that Science is another; that Literature has to do with ideas, and Science with realities; that Literature is of a personal character, that Science treats of what is universal and eternal. In proportion, then, as Scripture excludes the personal colouring of its writers, and rises into the region of pure and mere inspiration, when it ceases in any sense to be the writing of man, of St. Paul or St. John, of Moses or Isaiah, then it comes to belong to Science, not Literature. Then it conveys the things of heaven, unseen verities, divine manifestations, and them alone—not the ideas, the feelings, the aspirations, of its human instruments, who, for all that they were inspired and infallible, did not cease to be men. St. Paul's epistles, then, I consider to be literature in a real and true sense, as personal, as rich in reflection and emotion, as Demosthenes or Euripides; and, without ceasing to be revelations of objective truth, they are expressions of the subjective notwithstanding. On the other hand, portions of the Gospels, of the book of Genesis, and other passages of the Sacred Volume, are of the nature of Science. Such is the beginning of St. John's Gospel, which we read at the end of Mass. Such is the Creed. I mean, passages such as these are the mere enunciation of eternal things, without (so to say) the medium of any human mind transmitting them to us. The words used have the grandeur, the majesty, the calm, unimpassioned beauty

of Science, they are in no sense Literature, they are in no sense personal, and therefore they are easy to apprehend, and easy to translate.

Did time admit I could show you parallel instances of what I am speaking of in the Classics, inferior to the inspired word in proportion as the subject-matter of the classical authors is immensely inferior to the subjects treated of in Scripture—but parallel, inasmuch as the classical author or speaker ceases for the moment to have to do with Literature, as speaking of things objectively, and rises to the serene sublimity of Science. But I should be carried too far if I began

I shall then merely sum up what I have said, and come to a conclusion. Reverting, then, to my original question, what is the meaning of Letters, as contained, Gentlemen, in the designation of your Faculty, I have answered, that by Letters or Literature is meant the expression of thought in language, where by 'thought' I mean the ideas, feelings, views, reasonings, and other operations of the human mind. And the Art of Letters is the method by which a speaker or writer brings out in words, worthy of his subject, and sufficient for his audience or readers, the thoughts which impress him. Literature, then, is of a personal character; it consists in the enunciations and teachings of those who have a right to speak as representatives of their kind, and in whose words their brethren find an interpretation of their own sentiments, a record of their own experience, and a suggestion for their own judgments. A great author, Gentlemen, is not one who merely has a *copia verborum*, whether in prose or verse, and can, as it were, turn on at his will any number of splendid phrases and swelling sentences; but he is one who has something to say and knows how to say it. I do

not claim for him, as such, any great depth of thought, or breadth of view, or philosophy, or sagacity, or knowledge of human nature, or experience of human life, though these additional gifts he may have, and the more he has of them the greater he is; but I ascribe to him, as his characteristic gift, in a large sense the faculty of Expression. He is master of the two-fold Logos, the thought and the word, distinct, but inseparable from each other. He may, if so be, elaborate his compositions, or he may pour out his improvisations, but in either case he has but one aim, which he keeps steadily before him, and is conscientious and single-minded in fulfilling. That aim is to give forth what he has within him; and from his very earnestness it comes to pass that, whatever be the splendour of his diction or the harmony of his periods, he has with him the charm of an incommunicable simplicity. Whatever be his subject, high or low, he treats it suitably and for its own sake. If he is a poet, '*nil molitur ineptè*'. If he is an orator, then too he speaks, not only '*distinctè*' and '*splendidè*,' but also '*aptè*'. His page is the lucid mirror of his mind and life—

He writes passionately, because he feels keenly, forcibly, because he conceives vividly, he sees too clearly to be vague; he is too serious to be otiose; he can analyze his subject, and therefore he is rich; he embraces it as a whole and in its parts, and therefore he is consistent; he has a firm hold of it, and therefore he is luminous. When his imagination wells up, it overflows in ornament, when his heart is touched, it thrills along his verse. He always has the right word for the right idea, and never a word too much. If he is brief, it is because few words suffice; when he is lavish of them, still each word has its mark, and aids,

not embarrasses, the vigorous march of his elocution. He expresses what all feel, but all cannot say; and his sayings pass into proverbs among his people, and his phrases become household words and idioms of their daily speech, which is tessellated with the rich fragments of his language, as we see in foreign lands the marbles of Roman grandeur worked into the walls and pavements of modern palaces

Such pre-eminently is Shakespeare among ourselves; such pre-eminently Virgil among the Latins; such in their degree are all those writers who in every nation go by the name of Classics. To particular nations they are necessarily attached from the circumstance of the variety of tongues, and the peculiarities of each, but so far they have a catholic and ecumenical character, that what they express is common to the whole race of man, and they alone are able to express it.

If then the power of speech is a gift as great as any that can be named,—if the origin of language is by many philosophers even considered to be nothing short of divine,—if by means of words the secrets of the heart are brought to light, pain of soul is relieved, hidden grief is carried off, sympathy conveyed, counsel imparted, experience recorded, and wisdom perpetuated,—if by great authors the many are drawn up into unity, national character is fixed, a people speaks, the past and the future, the East and the West are brought into communication with each other,—if such men are, in a word, the spokesmen and prophets of the human family,—it will not answer to make light of Literature or to neglect its study; rather we may be sure that, in proportion as we master it in whatever language, and imbibe its spirit, we shall ourselves become in our own measure the ministers of

like benefits to others, be they many or few, be they in the obscurer or the more distinguished walks of life, —who are united to us by social ties, and are within the sphere of our personal influence.

## CRABBED AGE AND YOUTH

ROBERT LOUIS STEVENSON

**T**HERE is a strong feeling in favour of cowardly and prudential proverbs. The sentiments of a man while he is full of ardour and hope are to be received, it is supposed, with some qualification. But when the same person has ignominiously failed and begins to eat up his words, he should be listened to like an oracle. Most of our pocket wisdom is conceived for the use of mediocre people, to discourage them from ambitious attempts, and generally console them in their mediocrity. And since mediocre people constitute the bulk of humanity, this is no doubt very properly so. But it does not follow that the one sort of proposition is any less true than the other, or that *Icarus* is not to be more praised, and perhaps more envied, than *Mr Samuel Budgett the Successful Merchant*. The one is dead, to be sure, while the other is still in his counting-house counting out his money, and doubtless this is a consideration. But we have, on the other hand, some bold and magnanimous sayings common to high races and natures, which set forth the advantage of the losing side, and proclaim it better to be a dead lion than a living dog. It is difficult to fancy how the mediocrities reconcile such sayings with their proverbs. According to the latter, every lad who goes to sea is an egregious ass; never to forget your umbrella through a long life would seem a higher and wiser flight of achievement than to go smiling to the stake: and so long as you



are a bit of a coward and inflexible in money matters, you fulfil the whole duty of man.

It is a still more difficult consideration for our average men, that while all their teachers, from Solomon down to Benjamin Franklin and the ungodly Binney, have inculcated the same ideal of manners, caution, and respectability, those characters in history who have most notoriously flown in the face of such precepts are spoken of in hyperbolical terms of praise, and honoured with public monuments in the streets of our commercial centres. This is very bewildering to the moral sense. You have Joan of Arc, who left a humble but honest and reputable livelihood under the eyes of her parents, to go a-colonelling, in the company of rowdy soldiers, against the enemies of France; surely a melancholy example for one's daughters! And then you have Columbus, who may have pioneered America, but, when all is said, was a most imprudent navigator. His Life is not the kind of thing one would like to put into the hands of young people; rather, one would do one's utmost to keep it from their knowledge, as a red flag of adventure and disintegrating influence in life. The time would fail me if I were to recite all the big names in history whose exploits are perfectly irrational and even shocking to the business mind. The incongruity is speaking; and I imagine it must engender among the mediocrities a very peculiar attitude towards the nobler and showier sides of national life. They will read of the Charge of Balaclava in much the same spirit as they assist at a performance of the *Lyons Mail*. Persons of substance take in the *Times* and sit composedly in pit or boxes according to the degree of their prosperity in business. As for the generals who go galloping up and down among bomb-shells in

absurd cocked hats—as for the actors who raddle their faces and demean themselves for hire upon the stage—they must belong, thank God! to a different order of beings, whom we watch as we watch the clouds careering in the windy, bottomless inane, or read about like characters in ancient and rather fabulous annals. Our offspring would no more think of copying their behaviour, let us hope, than of doffing their clothes and painting themselves blue in consequence of certain admissions in the first chapter of their school history of England.

Discredited as they are in practice, the cowardly proverbs hold their own in theory; and it is another instance of the same spirit, that the opinions of old men about life have been accepted as final. All sorts of allowances are made for the illusions of youth; and none, or almost none, for the disenchantments of age. It is held to be a good taunt, and somehow or other to clinch the question logically, when an old gentleman waggles his head and says: “Ah, so I thought when I was your age” It is not thought an answer at all, if the young man retorts: “My venerable sir, so I shall most probably think when I am yours.” And yet the one is as good as the other: pass for pass, tit for tat, a Roland for an Oliver.

“Opinion in good men,” says Milton, “is but knowledge in the making.” All opinions, properly so called, are stages on the road to truth. It does not follow that a man will travel any further; but if he has really considered the world and drawn a conclusion, he has travelled as far. This does not apply to formulæ got by rote, which are stages on the road to nowhere but second childhood and the grave. To have a catchword in your mouth is not the same thing as to hold an opinion; still less is it the same

thing as to have made one for yourself. There are too many of these catchwords in the world for people to rap out upon you like an oath and by way of an argument. They have a currency as intellectual counters; and many respectable persons pay their way with nothing else. They seem to stand for vague bodies of theory in the background. The imputed virtue of folios full of knockdown arguments is supposed to reside in them, just as some of the majesty of the British Empire dwells in the constable's truncheon. They are used in pure superstition, as old clodhoppers spoil Latin by way of an exorcism. And yet they are vastly serviceable for checking unprofitable discussion and stopping the mouths of babes and sucklings. And when a young man comes to a certain stage of intellectual growth, the examination of these counters forms a gymnastic at once amusing and fortifying to the mind.

Because I have reached Paris, I am not ashamed of having passed through Newhaven and Dieppe. They were very good places to pass through, and I am none the less at my destination. All my old opinions were only stages on the way to the one I now hold, as itself is only a stage on the way to something else. I am no more abashed at having been a red-hot Socialist with a panacea of my own than at having been a sucking infant. Doubtless the world is quite right in a million ways; but you have to be kicked about a little to convince you of the fact. And in the meanwhile you must do something, be something, believe something. It is not possible to keep the mind in a state of accurate balance and blank; and even if you could do so, instead of coming ultimately to the right conclusion, you would be very apt to remain in a state of

balance and blank to perpetuity Even in quite intermediate stages, a dash of enthusiasm is not a thing to be ashamed of in the retrospect, if St. Paul had not been a very zealous Pharisee, he would have been a colder Christian For my part, I look back to the time when I was a Socialist with something like regret I have convinced myself (for the moment) that we had better leave these great changes to what we call great blind forces: their blindness being so much more perspicacious than the little, peering, partial eyesight of men I seem to see that my own scheme would not answer, and all the other schemes I ever heard propounded would depress some elements of goodness just as much as they encouraged others Now I know that in thus turning Conservative with years, I am going through the normal cycle of change and travelling in the common orbit of men's opinions. I submit to this, as I would submit to gout or gray hair, as a concomitant of growing age or else of failing animal heat, but I do not acknowledge that it is necessarily a change for the better—I dare say it is deplorably for the worse I have no choice in the business, and can no more resist this tendency of my mind than I could prevent my body from beginning to totter and decay If I am spared (as the phrase runs) I shall doubtless outlive some troublesome desires, but I am in no hurry about that; nor, when the time comes, shall I plume myself on the immunity Just in the same way, I do not greatly pride myself on having outlived my belief in the fairy tales of Socialism. Old people have faults of their own, they tend to become cowardly, niggardly, and suspicious Whether from the growth of experience or the decline of animal heat, I see that age leads to these and certain other faults: and it follows, of course

that while in one sense I hope I am journeying towards the truth, in another I am indubitably posting towards these forms and sources of error.

As we go catching and catching at this or that corner of knowledge, now getting a foresight of generous possibilities, now chilled with a glimpse of prudence, we may compare the headlong course of our years to a swift torrent in which a man is carried away; now he is dashed against a boulder, now he grapples for a moment to a trailing spray; at the end, he is hurled out and overwhelmed in a dark and bottomless ocean. We have no more than glimpses and touches; we are torn away from our theories; we are spun round and round and shown this or the other view of life, until only fools or knaves can hold to their opinions. We take a sight at a condition in life, and say we have studied it, our most elaborate view is no more than an impression. If we had breathing space, we should take the occasion to modify and adjust; but at this breakneck hurry, we are no sooner boys than we are adult, no sooner in love than married or jilted, no sooner one age than we begin to be another, and no sooner in the fulness of our manhood than we begin to decline towards the grave. It is in vain to seek for consistency or expect clear and stable views in a medium so perturbed and fleeting. This is no cabinet science, in which things are tested to a scruple; we theorise with a pistol to our head, we are confronted with a new set of conditions on which we have not only to pass a judgment, but to take action, before the hour is at an end. And we cannot even regard ourselves as a constant; in this flux of things, our identity itself seems in a perpetual variation: and not infrequently we find our own disguise the strangest in the masquerade. In the course of time, we grow

to love things we hated and hate things we loved Milton is not so dull as he once was, nor perhaps Ainsworth so amusing. It is decidedly harder to climb trees, and not nearly so hard to sit still. There is no use pretending, even the thrice royal game of hide-and-seek has somehow lost in zest. All our attributes are modified or changed; and it will be a poor account of us if our views do not modify and change in proportion. To hold the same views at forty as we held at twenty is to have been stupefied for a score of years, and take rank, not as a prophet, but as an unteachable brat, well buched and none the wiser. It is as if a ship captain should sail to India from the Port of London; and having brought a chart of the Thames on deck at his first setting out should obstinately use no other for the whole voyage.

And mark you, it would be no less foolish to begin at Gravesend with a chart of the Red Sea. *Si Jeunesse savait, si Vieillesse pouvait*, is a very pretty sentiment, but not necessarily right. In five cases out of ten, it is not so much that the young people do not know, as that they do not choose. There is something irreverent in the speculation, but perhaps the want of power has more to do with the wise resolutions of age than we are always willing to admit. It would be an instructive experiment to make an old man young again and leave him all his *savoir*. I scarcely think he would put his money in the Savings Bank after all; I doubt if he would be such an admirable son as we are led to expect; and as for his conduct in love, I believe firmly he would out-Herod Herod, and put the whole of his new compeers to the blush. Prudence is a wooden Juggernaut, before whom Benjamin Franklin walks with the portly air of a high-priest, and after whom dances many a successful mei-

chant in the character of Atys. But it is not a deity to cultivate in youth. If a man lives to any considerable age, it cannot be denied that he laments his imprudences, but I notice he often laments his youth a deal more bitterly and with a more genuine intonation.

It is customary to say that age should be considered, because it comes last. It seems just as much to the point, that youth comes first. And the scale fairly kicks the beam, if you go on to add that age, in a majority of cases, never comes at all. Disease and accident make short work of even the most prosperous persons; death costs nothing, and the expense of a headstone is an inconsiderable trifle to the happy heir. To be suddenly snuffed out in the middle of ambitious schemes is tragical enough at best, but when a man has been grudging himself his own life in the meanwhile, and saving up everything for the festival that was never to be, it becomes that hysterically moving sort of tragedy which lies on the confines of farce. The victim is dead—and he has cunningly overreached himself; a combination of calamities none the less absurd for being grim. To husband a favourite claret until the batch turns sour, is not at all an artful stroke of policy; and how much more with a whole cellar—a whole bodily existence! People may lay down their lives with cheerfulness in the sure expectation of a blessed immortality; but that is a different affair from giving up youth with all its admirable pleasure, in the hope of a better quality of gruel in a more than problematical, nay, more than improbable, old age. We should not compliment a hungry man, who should refuse a whole dinner and reserve all his appetite for the dessert, before he knew whether there was to be any dessert or not. If there be such a thing as imprudence in the world, we surely

have it here We sail in leaky bottoms and on great and perilous waters, and to take a cue from the dolorous old naval ballad, we have heard the mermaids singing, and know that we shall never see dry land any more Old and young, we are all on our last cruise If there is a fill of tobacco among the crew, for God's sake pass it round, and let us have a pipe before we go!

Indeed, by the report of our elders, this nervous preparation for old age is only trouble thrown away. We fall on guard and after all it is a friend who comes to meet us After the sun is down and the west faded, the heavens begin to fill with shining stars So, as we grow old, a sort of equable jog-trot of feeling is substituted for the violent ups and downs of passion and disgust, the same influence that restrains our hopes quiets our apprehensions: if the pleasures are less intense, the troubles are milder and more tolerable; and in a word, this period for which we are asked to hoard up everything as for a time of famine, is, in its own right, the richest, easiest, and happiest of life. Nay, by managing its own work and following its own happy inspiration, youth is doing the best it can to endow the leisure of age A full, busy youth is your only prelude to a self-contained and independent age, and the muff inevitably develops into the bore There are not many Doctor Johnsons, to set forth upon their first romantic voyage at sixty-four. If we wish to scale Mont Blanc or visit a thieves' kitchen in the East End, to go down in a diving-dress or up in a balloon, we must be about it while we are still young. It will not do to delay until we are clogged with prudence and limping with rheumatism, and people begin to ask us: "What does Gravity out of bed?" Youth is the time to go flash-



ing from one end of the world to the other both in mind and body; to try the manners of different nations; to hear the chimes at midnight; to see sunrise in town and country; to be converted at a revival; to circumnavigate the metaphysics, write halting verses, run a mile to see a fire, and wait all day long in the theatre to applaud *Hernani*. There is some meaning in the old theory about wild oats; and a man who has not had his green-sickness and got done with it for good, is as little to be depended on as an unvaccinated infant. "It is extraordinary," said Lord Beaconsfield, one of the brightest and best preserved of youths up to the date of his last novel,<sup>1</sup> "it is extraordinary how hourly and how violently change the feelings of an inexperienced young man." And this mobility is a special talent entrusted to his care; a sort of indestructible virginity; a magic armour, with which he can pass unhurt through great dangers and come unbedaubed out of the miriest passages. Let him voyage, speculate, see all that he can, do all that he may; his soul has as many lives as a cat; he will live in all weathers, and never be a half-penny the worse. Those who go to the devil in youth, with anything like a fair chance, were probably little worth saving from the first; they must have been feeble fellows—creatures made of putty and pack-thread, without steel or fire, anger or true joyfulness. In their composition, we may sympathise with their parents, but there is not much cause to go into mourning for themselves, for to be quite honest, the weak brother is the worst of mankind.

When the old man waggles his head and says, "Ah, so I thought when I was your age," he has proved the youth's case. Doubtless, whether from

<sup>1</sup> Lothian

growth of experience or decline of animal heat, he thinks so no longer; but he thought so while he was young, and all men have thought so while they were young, since there was dew in the morning or hawthorn in May, and here is another young man adding his vote to those of previous generations and rivetting another link to the chain of testimony. It is as natural and as right for a young man to be imprudent and exaggerated, to live in swoops and circles, and beat about his cage like any other wild thing newly captured, as it is for old men to turn gray, or mothers to love their offspring, or heroes to die for something worthier than their lives.

By way of an apologue for the aged, when they feel more than usually tempted to offer their advice, let me recommend the following little tale. A child who had been remarkably fond of toys (and in particular of lead soldiers) found himself growing to the level of acknowledged boyhood without any abatement of this childish taste. He was thirteen; already he had been taunted for dallying overlong about the playbox; he had to blush if he was found among his lead soldiers; the shades of the prison-house were closing about him with a vengeance. There is nothing more difficult than to put the thoughts of children into the language of their elders; but this is the effect of his meditations at this juncture: "Plainly," he said, "I must give up my playthings in the meanwhile, since I am not in a position to secure myself against idle jeers. At the same time, I am sure that playthings are the very pick of life, all people give them up out of the same pusillanimous respect for those who are a little older; and if they do not return to them as soon as they can, it is only because they grow stupid and forget. I shall be

wiser; I shall conform for a little to the ways of their foolish world; but so soon as I have made enough money, I shall retire and shut myself up among my playthings until the day I die." Nay, as he was passing in the train along the Esterel mountains between Cannes and Fréjus, he remarked a pretty house in an orange garden at the angle of a bay, and decided that this should be his Happy Valley. Astrea Redux; childhood was to come again! The idea has an air of simple nobility to me, not unworthy of Cincinnatus. And yet, as the reader has probably anticipated, it is never likely to be carried into effect. There was a worm in the bud, a fatal error in the premises. Childhood must pass away, and then youth, as surely as age approaches. The true wisdom is to be always seasonable, and to change with a good grace in changing circumstances. To love playthings well as a child, to lead an adventurous and honourable youth, and to settle when the time arrives, into a green and smiling age, is to be a good artist in life and deserve well of yourself and your neighbour.

You need repent none of your youthful vagaries. They may have been over the score on one side, just as those of age are probably over the score on the other. But they had a point; they not only befitted your age and expressed its attitude and passions, but they had a relation to what was outside of you, and implied criticisms on the existing state of things, which you need not allow to have been undeserved, because you now see that they were partial. All error, not merely verbal, is a strong way of stating that the current truth is incomplete. The follies of youth have a basis in sound reason, just as much as the embarrassing questions put by babes and sucklings. Their most anti-social acts indicate the defects of our

society. When the torrent sweeps the man against a boulder, you must expect him to scream, and you need not be surprised if the scream is sometimes a theory. Shelley, chafing at the Church of England, discovered the cure of all evils in universal atheism. Generous lads irritated at the injustices of society, see nothing for it but the abolishment of everything and Kingdom Come of anarchy. Shelley was a young fool, so are these cock-sparrow revolutionaries. But it is better to emit a scream in the shape of a theory than to be entirely insensible to the jars and incongruities of life and take everything as it comes in a foolish stupidity. Some people swallow the universe like a pill; they travel on through the world, like smiling images pushed from behind. For God's sake give me the young man who has brains enough to make a fool of himself! As for the others, the irony of facts shall take it out of their hands, and make fools of them in downright earnest, ere the farce be over. There shall be such a mopping and a mowing at the last day, and such blushing and confusion of countenance for all those who have been wise in their own esteem, and have not learnt the rough lessons that youth hands on to age. If we are indeed to perfect and complete our own natures and grow larger, stronger, and more sympathetic against some nobler career in the future, we had all best bestir ourselves to the utmost while we have the time. To equip a dull, respectable person with wings would be but to make a parody of an angel.

In short, if youth is not quite right in its opinions, there is a strong probability that age is not much more so. Undying hope is co-ruler of the human bosom with infallible credulity. A man finds he has been wrong at every preceding stage of his career, only to deduce the astonishing conclusion that he is at last

entirely right. Mankind, after centuries of failure, are still upon the eve of a thoroughly constitutional millennium. Since we have explored the maze so long without result, it follows, for poor human reason, that we cannot have to explore much longer; close by must be the centre, with a champagne luncheon and a piece of ornamental water. How if there were no centre at all, but just one alley after another, and the whole world a labyrinth without end or issue?

I overheard the other day a scrap of conversation, which I take the liberty to reproduce. "What I advance is true," said one. "But not the whole truth," answered the other. "Sir," returned the first (and it seemed to me there was a smack of Dr. Johnson in the speech), "Sir, there is no such thing as the whole truth!" Indeed, there is nothing so evident in life as that there are two sides to a question. History is one long illustration. The forces of nature are engaged, day by day, in cudgelling it into our backward intelligences. We never pause for a moment's consideration, but we admit it as an axiom. An enthusiast sways humanity exactly by disregarding this great truth, and dinning it into our ears that this or that question has only one possible solution; and your enthusiast is a fine flound fellow, dominates things for a while and shakes the world out of a doze; but when once he is gone, an army of quiet and un-influential people set to work to remind us of the other side and demolish the generous imposture. While Calvin is putting everybody exactly right in his *Institutes*, and hot-headed Knox is thundering in the pulpit, Montaigne is already looking at the other side in his library in Périgord, and predicting that they will find as much to quarrel about in the Bible as they had found already in the Church. Age may have one

side, but assuredly Youth has the other. There is nothing more certain than that both are right, except perhaps that both are wrong. Let them agree to differ, for who knows but what agreeing to differ may not be a form of agreement rather than a form of difference?

I suppose it is written that any one who sets up for a bit of a philosopher, must contradict himself to his very face. For here have I fairly talked myself into thinking that we have the whole thing before us at last, that there is no answer to the mystery, except that there are as many as you please; that there is no centre to the maze because, like the famous sphere, its centre is everywhere; and that agreeing to differ with every ceremony of politeness, is the only "one undisturbed song of pure consent" to which we are ever likely to lend our musical voices.

## A STUDY OF BENARES

MARGARET E. NOBLE

**E**VEN in great places we cannot always command the passive moments of rare insight. It was already my third visit to Benares when I sat one day, at an hour after noon, in the Vishwanath Bazar. Everything about me was hushed and drowsy. The *sadhu*-like shopkeepers nodded and dozed over their small wares; here the weaving of girdle or scapulary with a *mantram*, there a collection of small stone Shivas. There was little enough of traffic along the narrow footway, but overhead went the swallows by the invisible roadways of the blue flying in and out among their nests in the eaves. And the air was filled with their twittering, and with the sighing resonance of the great bell in the Temple of Vishweswar, as the constant stream of barefooted worshippers entered, and prayed, and before departing touched it. Swaying, sobbing, there it hung, seeming as if in that hour of peace it were some mystic dome, thrilled and responsive to every throb of the city's life. One could believe that these ripples of sound that ran across it were born of no mechanical vibration, but echoed, here a moan, there a prayer, and yet again a cry of gladness, in all the distant quarters of Benares: that the bell was even as a great weaver, weaving into unity of music, and throwing back on earth, those broken and tangled threads of joy and pain that without it would have seemed so meaningless and so confused.

A step beyond were the shops of the flower-sellers, who sell white flowers for the worship of Shiva across the threshold. Oh what a task, to spend the whole

of life, day after day, in this service only, the giving of the flowers for the image of the Lord! Has there been no soul that, occupied thus, has dreamed and dreamed itself into *Mukti*, through the daily offering?

And so came to me the thought of the old minsters of Europe, and of what it meant to live thus, like the swallows and the townsfolk and the flowers, ever in the shadow of a great cathedra! For that is what Benares is—a city built about the walls of a cathedral.

It is common to say of Benares that it is curiously modern, and there is on the face of it a certain truth in the statement. For the palaces and monasteries and temples that line the banks of the Ganges between the mouths of Baina and Asi have been built for the most part within the last three hundred years. There is skill and taste enough in India yet to rebuild them all again, if they fell to-morrow. Benares as she stands is in this sense the work of the Indian people as they are to-day.

But never did any so sing the song of the past. One is always catching a hint of reminiscence in the bazars, in the interior, and in the domestic architecture. Here is the Jammu *Chhattra* for instance, built in the Jaunpur Pathan style, common in Northern India from the twelfth to the fourteenth centuries. Not far off again, we have a glimpse of a roof-balus-trade that retains many of the characteristics of an Asokan rail, so clearly is it a wooden fence rendered in stone. I have seen a pillared hall too, in a house looking out upon the Ganges, that might almost have known the two thousand years that its owners claimed for it. And here in the bazar of Vishwanath we are reading still, it may be, that very pathway through the forest that was followed by the Vedic forefathers, when first they saw the sun rise on the East of the



great river, and offered the *Hom* where the golden gate of Vishweswar stands to-day, chanting their *ryks* in celebration of worship<sup>1</sup>

Nothing holds its place longer than a road. The winding alleys between the backs of houses and gardens in European cities may, at no distant date, have been paths through meadows and cornfields. And similarly, in all countries, a footway is apt to be a silent record of unwritten history. But who shall recover the story of this little street, or write the long long poem of the lives and deaths of those whose feet have passed to and forth along its flagstones in four thousand years?

Truly the city, even as she stands, is more ancient than any superficial critic would suppose. It was here at Sainath, in the year 583 B.C. or thereabouts, that the great message pealed out whose echoes have never died away in history, "Open ye your ears, O Monks, the deliverance from death is found!" And the importance which the Deer-Park thus assumes in the life of Buddha, both before and after the attainment of Nirvana, sufficiently proves its importance as the university of philosophy of its own age. Three hundred years later Asoka, seeking to build memorials of all the most sacred events in the history of his great Master, was able, as the recent excavations show us, to make a tiny stupa with its rail in some cell, by that time already underground, whose site had been especially sanctified by the touch of Buddha's feet. We thus learn, not only that the Deer-Park of Benares (so called, probably, because pains were taken to keep it cleared of larger game) was important in the year 583 B.C., and again in 250 B.C., but also

<sup>1</sup> The allusion here is not only to the Sanskrit *ryks*, but also to the early Norse *ryks* and *runes*.

that it was sufficiently a centre of resort throughout the intervening period to guarantee its maintenance of an unbroken tradition with regard to points of extremely minute detail. But it was not Sarnath alone that saw the coming and going of Buddha in the birth of the great enlightenment. Nor was it the Abkariyeh Kand alone that had already formed an important religious centre for ages before the early Mohammedan period. The very name of the Dasasvamedh Ghât and Bazar commemorates a period long enough to have included ten imperial sacrifices, each one of which must have represented at least a reign. Probably throughout the Pataliputra age, that is to say from 350 B C to A D 528, Benares was the ecclesiastical and sacrificial seat of empire. It contains at least two Asokan pillars, one in the grounds of the Queen's College, and the other, as we now know, at the entrance to the old-time Monastery of Sarnath. And we know with certainty that in the youth of Buddha it was already a thriving industrial centre. For the robes that he threw aside, perhaps in the year 590 B C, to adopt the *gerua* of the *sannyasin*, are said in many books to have been made of Benares silk.

But this is in truth only what we might have expected. For the water-way is always in early ages the chief geographical feature of a country, and the position of Benares at the northward bend of the river determines the point of convergence for all the foot-roads of the South and East, and makes her necessarily the greatest distributing centre in India. Thus she constitutes a palimpsest, not a simple manuscript, of cities. One has here been built upon another; period has accumulated upon period. There are houses in the crowded quarters whose foundations are laid,

as it were, in mines of bricks, and whose owners live upon the sale of these ancestral wares. And there is at least one temple that I know of whose floor is eight or ten feet below the level of the present street, and whose date is palpably of the second to the fourth century after Christ

If then we may compare large things with small, Benares may be called the Canterbury of the Asokan and post-Asokan India. What Delhi became later to the militarised India of the Rajput and the Moslem, that Benares had already been to an earlier India, whose eastern provinces had seen Buddha. At Sarnath the memory of the great *Sannyasin* was preserved by the devoted members of a religious order, either Buddhist or Jain. At Benares the Brahmans laboured, as citizens and householders, to enforce the lesson that none of his greatness was lacking in the Great God. The Shiva, clad in the tigerskin and seated in meditation like a Buddha, who is carved in low relief at the entrance to Elephanta in the harbour of Bombay, was the Hindu ideal of the later Buddhist period. And so the Vedic city, through whose streets had passed the Blessed One, became the sacred city of Shiva; and to make and set up his emblem there—the form in stone of the formless God—was held for long ages after the same act of merit that the erecting of votive stupas had so long been in places of Buddhistic pilgrimage. Nay, even now old stupas remain of the early Puranic period, and early Shivas of a later phase of development, about the streets and *ghâts* of Benares, to tell of the impress made by Buddha on an age that was then already passing away.

But Benares is not only an Indian Canterbury, it is also an Oxford. Under the shadow of temples and monasteries cluster the schools and dwellings of the

pundits or learned Sanskritists, and from all parts of India the poor students flock there to study the classics and ancient rituals of Hinduism. The fame of Nuddea is in her Sanskrit logic, but that of Benares in her philosophy and Brahman lore. Thus she remains ever the central authority on questions of worship and of the faith, and her influence is carried to all ends of India by every wandering scholar returning to his own province. It is a mediæval type of culture, of course, carried out in the mediæval way. It takes a man twelve years here to exhaust a single book, while under the modern comparative method we are compelled to skim the surfaces of a score or more in a single year. It follows that we have here a study of the contents rather than the relations of a given work, significance rather than co-ordination. But for this very reason the Benares-trained scholar is of his own kind, secure in his type, as fearless in his utterance of that which he knows as those other mediævalists in a modern world, John Bunyan and William Blake.

But in Benares as a culture-centre even in the present generation, though it is fast vanishing, we have another extraordinary advantage to note. Being as she is the authoritative seat of Hinduism and Sanskrit learning, the city stands nevertheless, side by side with Jaunpur, the equally authoritative centre of Mussulman learning in India. She represents in fact the dividing line between the Sanskritic civilisation of the Hindu provinces and the Persian and Arabic culture of the Mohammedan. And consequently she still has members of a class that once constituted one of the most perfect types of national education in the world, elderly Hindu gentlemen who were trained in their youth not only to read Sanskrit literature, but also to read and enjoy what was then the distinctive accom-

plishment of royal courts, namely Persian poetry. And the mind that is born of this particular synthesis—rendered possible in Benares by the presence on the one hand of the Hindu pundit and the neighbourhood on the other of the Jaunpur *maulvi*—is not that of a great scholar certainly, but it is that of a member of the wide world, polished, courtly, and urbane. One of the most charming forms of high breeding that humanity has known will be lost with the last well-born Hindu who has had the old time training in Persian. Nor indeed can anyone who has seen modern and mediæval culture side by side, as we may still sometimes see them in Asia, doubt that the true sense of literature is the prerogative of the mediævalist.

Benares, then, is an informal university. And like other universities of the Middle Ages, it has always supported its scholars and students by a vast network of institutions of mutual aid. It is no disgrace there for a boy to beg his bread, when love of learning has brought him a thousand miles on foot. Nor was it in mediæval Leipzig, or Heidelberg, or Oxford. These are the scholars for whom our schools and colleges were founded. The wives of the burghers expected to contribute to the maintenance of such. And it is in Benares only food that is wanted. In the dark hours of one winter morning, as I made my way through the Bengaltollah to the bathing-*ghâts*, I could hear in the distance the sound of Sanskrit chanting. And soon I came up to a student who had slept all night on the stone verandah of some well-to-do house, screened from the bitterest pinch of cold by carefully-drawn walls of common sacking, and now had risen before five to read by the light of a hurricane lamp and commit to memory his task for the day.

Further on another studied, with no such luxuries as canvas walls and paraffin lamp. He had slept all night under his single blanket on the open stone, and the tiny Indian *batti* was the light by which he was reading now.

Here is love of learning with labour and poverty. It is obviously impossible for these to earn their bread in addition to performing the tasks imposed by their schools. The spontaneous benefactions of rich nobles and merchants were doubtless enough in the Middle Ages—when religious enthusiasm was high, and the problem still limited—to maintain the pundits in whose houses the students lived. But in modern times the institution of the *chhatras* has grown up, and it is said that in the city there are three hundred and sixty-five of these. A *chhatras* is a house at which a given number of persons receive a meal daily. Some give double doles. Some give to others besides Brahmans. Many have been themselves the gifts of pious widows, and a few of kings. But that it is the duty of the city to provide food for her scholars all are agreed. Is not Benares to these children of Shiva Annapurna the Mother, She whose hand is ever “full of grain”?

But Benares is more than the precincts of a group of temples. She is more even than a university, and more than the historic and industrial centre of three thousand years. The solemn Manikarnika stands rightly in the centre of her river-front. For she is a great national *shamshan*, a vast burning-*ghât*. “He who dies in Benares attains Nirvana.” The words may be nothing but an expression of intense affection. Who would not love to die on those beautiful *ghâts*, with the breath of the night or the morning on his brow, the sound of temple-bells and chanting in his ears,

and the promises of Shiva and memories of the past in his heart? Such a death, embraced in an ecstasy, would it not in itself be *Mukti*, the goal? "Oh Thou great *Jnanam*, that art God, dwell thou in me!" Such was the vision that broke upon one who bent from the flower-seller's balcony to see evensong chanted by the Brahmans round the blossom-crowned Vishweswar. And never again can that mind think of God as seated on a throne, with His children kneeling round Him, for to it the secret has been shown that Shiva is within the heart of man, and He is the Absolute Consciousness, the Infinite Knowledge, and the Unconditioned Bliss. Which of us would not die, if we could, in the place that was capable of flashing such a message across the soul?

All India feels this. All India hears the call. And one by one, step by step, with bent head and bare feet for the most part, come those, chiefly widows and *sadhus*, whose lives are turned away from all desire save that of a holy death. How many monuments of *sati* are to be seen in Benares, one on the Manikarnika Ghât, and many dotted about the fields and roads outside! These are the memorials of triumphant wifehood in the hour of its bereavement. But there are other triumphs. Clothed and veiled in purest white, bathing, fasting, and praying continually, here in the hidden streets of Benares dwell thousands of those whose lives are one long effort to accumulate merit for the beloved second self. And if the scholar be indeed the servant of the nation, is the saint less? The lamp of ideal womanhood, burning in the sheltered spot at the feet of the image, and "not flickering," is this, or is it not, as a light given to the world?

Benares, again, is an epitome of the whole Indian synthesis of nationality. As the new-comer is rowed

down the river past the long lines of temples and bathing-*ghâts*, while the history of each is told to him in turn, he feels catching his breath at each fresh revelation of builded beauty, that all roads in India always must have led to Benares. Here is the monastery of Kedarnath, the headquarters of the southern monks, which represents to the province of Madras all the merits of Himalayan pilgrimage. Here again is the *ghât* of Ahalya Bai Rani, the wonderful widowed Mahratta Queen, whose temples and roads and tanks remain all over India to witness to the greatness of the mother heart in rulers. Or behind this we may see the *Math* of Sankaracharya's order, the high caste *Dandis*, whose line is unbroken and orthodoxy unimpeached from the days of their founder, early in the ninth century, till the present hour. Again, we see the palace of the Nagpore Bhonslas (now in the hands of the Maharaja of Darbhanga), connecting Benares with the memory of the Mahratta power, and further on the royal buildings of Gwalior and even of Nepal. Nor is everything here dedicated to Shiva, Shiva's city though it be. For here again we come on the temple of *Beni Madhab*, one of the favourite names of Vishnu. Even Mohammedan sovereigns could not submit to be left out. Secular science is embodied in the beautiful old *Mân Mandir* of Akbar's time, with its instruments and lecture-hall, and the Mussulmân faith in the towering minarets of Aurungzeb's mosque.

But what is true of the Ganges front becomes still more clear when we pass behind and consider the city as a whole. Ranjit Singh made no separate building, but he linked Vishweswar irrevocably with Amritsar, when he covered its roof with gold. Zemindars of Bengal, Sirdars of the Punjab, and



nobles of Rajputana, all have vied with one another in leaving temples and shrines, charities and benefactions, dotted over the *Panch Kos*.

Or we may see the same thing industrially. We can buy in Benares, besides her own delicate webs, the *saris* of Madras and the Dekkan alike. Or we may go to the Vishwanath Bazar for the carpentry of the Punjab. We may find in the same city of the brass work of Nasik, of Trichinopoli, and of the Nepalese frontier. It is there, better than anywhere else in India, that we may buy the stone vessels of Gaya, of Jubbulpur, and of Agra, or the Shivas of the Nerbudda and the *salagrans* of the Gumti and Nepal. And the food of every province may be bought in these streets, the language of every race in India heard within these walls.

On questions of religion and of custom, again, in all parts of India, as has been said, the supreme appeal is to Benares. The princes of Gwahor dine only when the news has been telegraphed that the day's food has been offered here. Here too the old works of art and religion, and the old craftsmen practising quaint crafts, linger longest, and may still perchance be found when they have become rare to the point of vanishing everywhere else. Here the *Vyasa*s chant authoritative renderings of the epic stories on the *ghâts*. And here at great banquets food is still considered only secondary to the reciting of the scriptures. Surely it is clear enough that as in the Latin Empire of City and of Church the saying grew up, "All roads lead to Rome," so also in India, so long as she remains India, all roads, all faiths, all periods, and all historical developments will lead us sooner or later back to Benares

A city in such a position, possessed of such manifold significance, the pilgrim-centre of a continent, must always have had an overwhelming need of strong civic organisation. And that such a need was recognised in the city during the ages of its growth, we may see in many ways. No mediæval township in Europe gives stronger evidence of self-organisation than we find here.

"The mediæval city," says the great European sociologist Kropotkin, "appears as a double federation of all householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the parish, the section—and of individuals united by oath into guilds, according to their professions, the former being a product of the village-community origin of the city, while the second is a subsequent growth, called into life by new conditions."

This is a master statement which can at once be applied here, if only we dismiss the European idea of labour as the main *motif* of this city's growth, and substitute the Indian equivalent of religion and learning. Labour is present here of course, and has flourished, as we know, in this spot, during at least three thousand years, but it has never reared its head to become a predominant and independent factor in the growth of Benares. This central significance, this higher element in the federation, has been supplied here, by the presence of priests and pundits, monasteries and poets, bound to each other, not by professional oaths, but by the invisible and spiritual bonds of caste and tradition, and religious bonds—by Hinduism, in short. Not the craftsman, but the Hindu carrying the craftsman with him, has made Benares what she is, and here in this city we have the picture of one of the finest things that the Indian faith—uninterfered with by foreign influences, and

commanding the enthusiastic co-operation of the whole nation—could produce. It is no mean achievement. On Benares as it has made it the Hindu genius may well take its stand. By the city of Shiva it may well claim to be judged.

It is, however, when we turn to the first element in Kropotkin's analysis of the city that we find Benares to be most completely illuminated. In a pilgrim-city, we cannot but think that some mutual organisation of householders for self-defence must have been a prime necessity. The policing of such a city was more than usually important. What were the arrangements made for sanitation, for ambulance, for hospital-service, for the clearing-out of vagrants? These things may not in the Middle Ages have been called by these names, but assuredly their realities existed, and such necessities had to be met. Householders united into small territorial unions—the street, the *para*. And is not Benares filled with small courts and alleys, divided from the main streets by short flights of broad steps, each crowned by its own gate? Is it more than thirty or forty years since each of these had its own guard or *concierge* and was closed at night to be opened again in the morning? In many cases of course the massive doors themselves are now removed, but the pillars and hooks and hinges still remain to bear witness to their old function. In other instances they stand there still pushed back against the wall, and one pauses a moment as one passes to ask, When was this last shut? These portals to each little group of important houses are a silent witness to the order and cleanliness of Benares as the Hindu made it. Just as in Edinburgh, as in Nurnberg, as in Paris, so here also, the group of wealthy houses thus barred in at a certain hour after dark was responsible

for the freedom of its own space from uncleanness and violence. It must undertake the connection between its own sanitation and the underground sewage system of the city, which was similar in character to that of ancient Pataliputra. It must be responsible for the proper alleviation of such suffering as fell within its limits, and its members must duly contribute their full share to the common burdens of the city as a whole. But when we come to the gates of the *para* or section, of which some still remain guarded by their watchmen outstanding in the bazaars, we understand the full importance to the mediæval mind of the question of civic order and of a strong but peaceful civic defence. For here within these gateways, we find the shrines of *Kal Bhairab*, the divine *Kotwal*, who perambulates the city of Shiva night after night, with staff and dog, who is worshipped by sentinels and gate-keepers, and who has the supreme discretion of accepting or rejecting at his will those who fain would enter within the sacred bounds. Of the divine *Kotwal* every city-watchman held himself as minister and earthly representative. And in this worship of *Kal Bhairab*, the Black Demon of Shiva, we may read the whole history of the civic organisation of Benares in the Middle Ages.

The modern age was later perhaps in arriving, here than elsewhere. But arrive it did, and its work when it came, here as elsewhere, was to multiply problems and to discredit the solutions that had been discovered by slow ages of growth. All that strong rope of self-defence, twisted of so many strands of local combination and territorial responsibility, with which Benares had been wont to meet her own needs, was now done away. The communal sense was stunned by the blow, for the fact was demonstrated to

it *ad nauseam* that it was itself powerless against strong central combinations of force. Thus the old self-jurisdiction and self-administration of the civic group was banished. And at the same time the railways connected Benares with every part of India, and made it possible to pour in upon her daily as large a number of diseased, infirm, and starving persons, as may once have reached her on foot or in boats in the course of a year. Thus a forest of needs has grown up in modern Benares, of which the past generations with their common-sense, their spontaneous kindness, and their thrifty municipal management, knew nothing.

Poor working-folk come, when the last hope has failed them, trusting that the Great God will be their refuge in his own city. In the old days, when Benares was a wealthy capital, these would have made their way to some house or *para* inhabited by well-to-do townsfolk from their own district, and through their kind offices work would sooner or later have been found. But now they find themselves amongst strangers. The music of temple-bells is the only sound familiar to them. Priests and fellow-worshippers are alike unknown. And it may be that in the sanctuary-city they have but fled from one despair to another.

Or the poor student comes here to learn. In the old days he would have found house-room as well as food in the home of his guru, or of some wealthy patron, and if he fell ill, he would have been cared for there, as a member of the family. To-day the number of so-called students is great, and possibly amongst them the indolent are many. For certainly temptations must have multiplied, at the same time that the moral continuity of the old relation

between distant homestead and metropolitan *para* has been lost. In any case, even amongst the most earnest, some of these poor students have, as we have seen, to live in the streets. And when illness overtakes such there is none to aid, for there is none even to know. The *chhatras* are certainly a wonderful institution, showing the unexpected power of this ancient city to meet the needs of her own children. But the *chhatras* cannot offer home and hospital. And these also are sometimes needed.

And finally there is the case of the widowed gentlewomen who come to Benares to pray for their dead. As with others, so here also there is in many cases but slender provision. And yet nowadays they cannot come to friends, but must needs hire a room and pay rent to a landlord. Nor can we venture to pass too harsh a verdict on the capitalist who evicts his tenant—though a woman and delicately nurtured—when the rent has fallen too long into arrears. For he probably has to deal with the fact on such a scale that the course is forced upon him, if he will save himself from ruin. More striking even than this is that fear of the police, which we find everywhere amongst the helpless, and which drives the keeper of the apartment-house to dismiss its penniless inmates when near to death, lest he should afterwards be arraigned in court for having stolen their provision!

Prostrate, then, under the disintegrating touch of the Modern Era, lies at this moment the most perfect of mediæval cities. Is she to become a memory to her children after four thousand or more years of a constant growth? Or will there prove to be some magic in the new forces of enthusiasm that are running through the veins of the nation, that shall yet make itself potent to renew her ancient life-streams also?

## THE JUNGLE.

H. G. WELLS

ONE night when he was in India the spirit of adventure came upon Benham. He had gone with Kepple, of the forestry department, into the jungle country in the hills above the Tapti. He had been very anxious to see something of that aspect of Indian life, and he had snatched at the chance Kepple had given him. But they had scarcely started before the expedition was brought to an end by an accident; Kepple was thrown by a pony and his ankle broken. He and Benham bandaged it as well as they could, and a litter was sent for, and meanwhile they had to wait in the camp that was to have been the centre of their jungle raids. The second day of this waiting was worse for Kepple than the first, and he suffered much from the pressure of this amateurish bandaging. In the evening Benham got cool water from the well and rearranged things better; the two men dined and smoked under their thatched roof beneath the big banyan, and then Kepple, tired out by his day of pain, was carried to his tent. Presently he fell asleep and Benham was left to himself.

Now that the heat was over he found himself quite indisposed to sleep. He felt full of life and anxious for happenings. He went back and sat down upon the iron bedstead beneath the banyan that Kepple had lain upon through the day, and he watched the soft immensity of the Indian night swallow up the last lingering colours of the world. It left the outlines, it obliterated nothing, but it stripped off the superficial

reality of things The moon was full and high overhead, and the light had not so much gone as changed from definition and the blazing glitter and reflections of solidity to a translucent and unsubstantial clearness The jungle that bordered the little encampment north, south, and west seemed to have crept a little nearer, enriched itself with blackness, taken to itself voices

(Surely it had been silent during the day.)

A warm, faintly-scented breeze just stirred the dead grass and the leaves In the day the air had been still

Immediately after the sunset there had been a great crying of peacocks in the distance, but that was over now; the crickets, however, were still noisy, and a persistent sound had become predominant, an industrious unmistakable sound, a sound that took his mind back to England, in midsummer It was like a watchman's rattle—a nightjar!

So there were nightjars here in India, too! One might have expected something less familiar. And then came another cry from far away over the heat-stripped tree-tops, a less familiar cry It was repeated. Was that perhaps some craving leopard, a tiger cat, a panther——?

"Hunt, Hunt"; that might be a deer

Then suddenly an angry chattering came from the dark trees quite close at hand A monkey? . .

These great, scarce visible, sweeping movements through the air were bats . . .

Of course, the day jungle is the jungle asleep This was its waking hour. Now the deer were arising from their forms, the bears creeping out of their dens amidst the rocks and blundering down the gullies, the tigers and panthers and jungle cats stalking noiselessly from their lairs in the grass. Countless creatures that



dwindles before our new civilization, that seems fated to shrivel up and pass altogether before the dry advance of physical science and material organization. He was full of unsatisfied curiosities about its fierce hungers and passions, its fears and cruelties, its instincts and its well-nigh incommunicable and yet most precious understandings. He had long ceased to believe that the wild beast is wholly evil, and safety and plenty the ultimate good for men. . . .

Perhaps he would never get nearer to this mysterious jungle life than he was now.

It was intolerably tantalizing that it should be so close at hand and so inaccessible . . .

As Benham sat brooding over his disappointment, the moon, swimming on through the still circle of the hours, passed slowly over him. The lights and shadows about him changed by imperceptible gradations, and a long pale alley, where the native cart-track drove into the forest, opened slowly out of the darkness, slowly lengthened. It opened out to him with a quality of invitation . . .

There was the jungle before him. Was it after all so inaccessible?

"Come!" the road said to him.

Benham rose and walked out a few paces into the moonlight and stood motionless.

Was he afraid?

Even now some hungry watchful monster might lurk in yonder shadows, watching with infinite still patience. Kepple had told him how they would sit still for hours—staring unblinkingly as cats stare at a fire—and then crouch to advance. Beneath the shrill overtone of the nightjars, what noiseless grey shapes, what deep breathings and cracklings and creepings might there not be? . . .

Was he afraid?

That question determined him to go.

He hesitated whether he should take a gun. A stick? A gun, he knew was a dangerous thing to an inexperienced man. No! He would go now, even as he was, with empty hands. At least he would go as far as the end of that band of moonlight. If for no other reason than because he was afraid.

Now!

For a moment it seemed to him as though his feet were too heavy to lift, and then, hands in pockets, khaki-clad, an almost invisible figure, he strolled towards the cart-track.

Come to that, he halted for a moment to regard the distant fires of the men. No one would miss him. They would think he was in his tent. He faced the stirring quiet ahead. The cart-track was a rutted path of soft, warm sand, on which he went almost noiselessly. A bird squabbled for an instant in a thicket. A great white owl floated like a flake of moonlight across the track and vanished without a sound among the trees.

Along the moonlit path went Benham, and when he passed near trees his footsteps became noisy with the rustle and crash of dead leaves. The jungle was full of moonlight; twigs, branches, creepers, grass-clumps came out acutely vivid. The trees and bushes stood in pools of darkness, and beyond were pale stretches of misty moonshine and big rocks shining with an unearthly lustre. Things seemed to be clear and yet uncertain. It was as if they dissolved or retired a little and then returned to solidity.

A sudden chattering broke out overhead, and black across the great stars soared a flying squirrel and caught a twig, and ran for shelter. A second hesitated

in a tree-top and pursued. They chased each other and vanished abruptly. He forgot his sense of insecurity in the interest of these active little silhouettes. And he noted how much bigger and more wonderful the stars can look when one sees them through interlacing branches.

Ahead was darkness, but not so dark when he came to it that the track was invisible. He was at the limit of his intention, but now he saw that that had been a childish project. He would go on, he would walk right into the jungle. His first disinclination was conquered, and the soft intoxication of the subtropical moonshine was in his blood . . . But he wished he could walk as a spirit walks, without this noise of leaves . . .

Yes, this was very wonderful and beautiful, and there must always be jungles for men to walk in. Always there must be jungle . . .

Some small beast snarled and bolted from under his feet. He stopped sharply. He had come into a darkness under great boughs, and now he stood still as the little creature scuttled away. Beyond the track emerged into a dazzling whiteness . . .

In the stillness he could hear the deer belling again in the distance, and then came a fuss of monkeys in a group of trees near at hand. He remained still until this had died away into mutterings.

Then on the verge of movement he was startled by a ripe mango that slipped from its stalk and fell out of the tree and struck his hand. It took a little time to understand that, and then he laughed, and his muscles relaxed, and he went on again.

A thorn caught at him and he disentangled himself.

He crossed the open space, and the moon was like a great shield of light spread out above him. All the

world seemed swimming in its radiance. The stars were like lamps in a mist of silvery blue.

The track led him on across white open spaces of shrivelled grass and sand, amidst trees where shadows made black patternings upon the silver, and then it plunged into obscurities. For a time it lifted, and then on one hand the bush fell away, and he saw across a vast moonlit valley wide undulations of open cultivation, belts of jungle, copses, and a great lake as black as ebony. For a time the path ran thus open, and then the jungle closed in again and there were more thickets, more levels of grass, and in one place far overhead among the branches he heard and stood for a time perplexed at a vast deep humming of bees. . . .

Presently a black monster with a hunched back went across his path heedless of him and making a great noise in the leaves. He stood quite still until it had gone. He could not tell whether it was a boar or hyæna; most probably, he thought, a boar because of the heaviness of its rush.

The path dropped downhill for a time, crossed a ravine, ascended. He passed a great leafless tree on which there were white flowers. On the ground also, in the darkness under the trees, there were these flowers; they were dropping noiselessly, and since they were visible in the shadows, it seemed to him that they must be phosphorescent. And they emitted a sweetish scent that lay heavily athwart the path. Presently he passed another such tree. Then he became aware of a tumult ahead of him, a smashing of leaves, a snorting and slobbering, grunting and sucking, a whole series of bestial sounds. He halted for a little while, and then drew nearer, picking his steps to avoid too great a noise. Here were more of those

white-blossomed trees, and beneath, in the darkness, something very black and big was going to and fro, eating greedily. Then he found that there were two and then more of these black things, three or four of them.

Curiosity made Benham draw nearer, very softly.

Presently one showed in a patch of moonlight, startlingly big, a huge, black hairy monster with a long white nose on a grotesque face, and he was stuffing armfuls of white blossom into his mouth with his curved fore claws. He took not the slightest notice of the still man, who stood perhaps twenty yards away from him. He was too blind and careless. He snorted and smacked his slobbering lips, and plunged into the shadows again. Benham heard him root among the leaves and grunt appreciably. The air was heavy with the reek of the crushed flowers.

For some time Benham remained listening to and peering at these preoccupied gluttons. At last he shrugged his shoulders, and left them and went on his way. For a long time he could hear them; then just as he was on the verge of forgetting them altogether, some dispute arose among them, and there began a vast uproar, squeals, protests, comments, one voice ridiculously replete and authoritative, ridiculously suggestive of a drunken judge with his mouth full, and a shrill voice of grievance high above the others. . . .

The uproar of the bears died away at last, almost abruptly, and left the jungle to the incessant night-jars . . .

For what end was this life of the jungle?

All Benham's senses were alert to the sounds and appearances about him, and at the same time his mind

was busy with the perplexities of that riddle. Was the jungle just an aimless pool of life that man must drain and clear away? Or is it to have a use in the greater life of our race that now begins? Will man value the jungle as he values the precipice, for the sake of his manhood? Will he preserve it?

Man must keep hard, man must also keep fierce. Will the jungle keep him fierce?

For life, thought Benham, there must be insecurity. . . .

He had missed the track. .

He was now in a second ravine. He was going downward, walking on silvery sand amidst great boulders, and now there was a new sound in the air.

— It was the croaking of frogs. Ahead was a solitary gleam. He was approaching a jungle pool. . .

Suddenly the stillness was alive, in a panic uproar. "Honk!" cried a great voice, and "Honk!" There was a clatter of hoofs, a wild rush—a rush as it seemed towards him. Was he being charged? He backed against a rock. A great pale shape leaped by him, an antlered shape. It was a herd of big deer bolting suddenly out of the stillness. He heard the swish and smash of their retreat grow distant, disperse. He remained standing with his back to the rock.

Slowly the strophe and antistrophe of frogs and goat-suckers resumed possession of his consciousness. But now some primitive instinct perhaps, or some subconscious intimation of danger, made him meticulously noiseless.

He went on down a winding sound-deadening path of sand towards the drinking-place. He came to a wide white place that was almost level, and beyond it under clustering pale-stemmed trees shone the mirror surface of some ancient tank, and, sharp and black, a

dog-like beast sat on its tail in the midst of this space, started convulsively and went shinking into the undergrowth. Benham paused for a moment and then walked out softly into the light, and, behold! as if it were to meet him came a monster, a vast dark shape drawing itself lengthily out of the blackness, and stopped with a start as if it had been instantly changed to stone.

It had stopped with one paw advanced. Its striped mask was light and dark grey in the moonlight, grey but faintly tinged with ruddiness; its mouth was a little open, its fangs and a pendant of viscous saliva shone vivid. Its great round-pupilled eyes regarded him steadfastly. At last the nightmare of Benham's childhood had come true, and he was face to face with a tiger, uncaged, uncontrolled.

For some moments neither moved, neither the beast nor the man. They stood face to face, each perhaps with an equal astonishment, motionless and soundless, in that mad Indian moonlight that makes all things like a dream.

Benham stood quite motionless, and body and mind had halted together. That confrontation had an interminableness that had nothing to do with the actual passage of time. Then some trickle of his previous thoughts stirred in the frozen quiet of his mind.

He spoke hoarsely. "I am Man," he said, and lifted a hand as he spoke. "The Thought of the world"

His heart leaped within him as the tiger moved. But the great beast went sideways, gardant, only that its head was low, three noiseless instantaneous strides it made, and stood again watching him.

"Man," he said, in a voice that had no sound, and took a step forward

“ Wough ! ” With two bounds the monster had become a great grey streak that crackled and rustled in the shadows of the trees. And then it had vanished, become invisible and inaudible with a kind of instantaneousness.

For some seconds or some minutes Benham stood rigid, fearlessly expectant, and then far away up the ravine he heard the deer repeat their cry of alarm, and understood with a new wisdom that the tiger had passed among them and was gone .

He walked on towards the deserted tank, and now he was talking aloud.

“ I understand the jungle. I understand . If a few men die here, what matter? There are worse deaths than being killed. . . .

“ What is this fool’s trap of security?

“ Every time in my life that I have fled from security I have fled from death. . . .

“ Let men stew in their cities if they will. It is in the lonely places, in jungle and mountains, in snows and fires, in the still observatories and the silent laboratories, in those secret and dangerous places where life probes into life, it is there that the masters of the world, the lords of the beast, the rebel sons of Fate come to their own. . . .

“ You sleeping away there in the cities! Do you know what it means for you that I am here to-night?

“ Do you know what it means to you?

“ I am just one—just the precursor.

“ Presently if you will not budge, those hot cities must be burnt about you. You must come out of them. . . .”

He wandered now uttering his thoughts as they came to him, and he saw no more living creatures because they fled and hid before the sound of his voice.



He wandered until the moon, larger now and yellow tinged, was low between the black bars of the tree stems. And then it sank very suddenly behind a hilly spur and the light failed swiftly

He stumbled and went with difficulty. He could go no further among these rocks and ravines, and he sat down at the foot of a tree to wait for day.

He sat very still indeed.

A great stillness came over the world, a velvet silence that wrapped about him, as the velvet shadows wrapped about him. The corncrakes had ceased, all the sounds and stir of animal life had died away, the breeze had fallen. A drowsing comfort took possession of him. He grew more placid and more placid still. He was enormously content to find that fear had fled before him and was gone. He drifted into that state of mind when one thinks without ideas, when one's mind is like a starless sky, serene and empty

Some hours later Benham found that the trees and rocks were growing visible again, and he saw a very bright star that he knew must be Lucifer rising amidst the black branches. He was sitting upon a rock at the foot of a slender-stemmed leafless tree. He had been asleep, and it was daybreak. Everything was coldly clear and colourless.

He must have slept soundly.

He heard a cock crow, and another answer—jungle fowl these must be, because there could be no village within earshot—and then far away and bringing back memories of terraced houses and ripe walled gardens, with the scream of peacocks. And some invisible bird was making a hollow beating sound among the trees near at hand. *Tunk Tunk*, and out of the dry grass came a twittering

There was a green light in the east that grew stronger, and the stars after their magnitudes were dissolving in the blue; only a few remained faintly visible. The sound of birds increased. Through the trees he saw towering up a great mauve thing like the back of a monster—but that was nonsense, it was the crest of a steep hillside covered with woods of teak.

He stood up and stretched himself, and wondered whether he had dreamed of a tiger.

He tried to remember and retrace the course of his over-night wanderings.

A flight of emerald parakeets tore screaming through the trees, and then far away uphill he heard the creaking of a cart.

He followed the hint of a footmark, and went back up the glen slowly and thoughtfully.

Presently he came to a familiar place, a group of trees, a sheet of water, and the ruins of an old embankment. It was the ancient tank of his over-night encounter. The pool of his dream?

With doubt still in his mind, he walked round its margin to the sandy level beyond, and cast about and sought intently, and at last found, and then found clearly, imposed upon the tracks of several sorts of deer and the footprints of many biggish birds, first the great spoor of the tiger and then his own. Here the beast had halted, and here it had leapt aside. Here his own footmarks stopped. Here his heels had come together.

It had been no dream.

There was a white mist upon the water of the old tank like the bloom upon a plum, and the trees about it seemed smaller and the sand-space wider and rougher than they had seemed in the moonshine. Then the ground had looked like a floor of frosted silver.

And thence he went on upward through the fresh morning, until just as the east grew red with sunrise, he reached the cart-track from which he had strayed over-night. It was, he found, a longer way back to the camp than he remembered it to be. Perhaps he had struck the path further along. It curved about and went up and down and crossed three ravines. At last he came to that trampled place of littered white blossom under great trees where he had seen the bears.

The sunlight went before him in a sheaf of golden spears, and his shadow, that was at first limitless, crept towards his feet. The dew had gone from the dead grass and the sand was hot to his dry boots before he came back into the open space about the great banyan and the tents. And Kepple, refreshed by a night's rest and coffee, was wondering loudly where the devil he had gone.

## BIRDS AND THEIR ENEMIES.

E V LUCAS

FOR the past two weeks I have been watching two nests in the garden—a thrush's and a long-tailed tit's. The thrush built silently and unobserved in a box tree, the first news we had of the nest being the noisy departure of the old bird as someone moved too near. Providence surely (one cannot help thinking) having done so much for birds, might have gone a step further and gifted them with the knowledge that when in danger it is better to lie low than to bustle away. However, off the thrush flew, and revealed five eggs. A day or so later the young birds hatched out.

The long-tailed tits worked entirely without secrecy. They sought their building site almost ostentatiously, and, having settled upon it, conveyed their materials thither under our very eyes. Lichen from the apple trees formed the outer wall, and the lining was chiefly feathers from other birds, but whether picked up casually or fought for I know not. The building operations lasted about ten days, and then came the eggs; and then, as I had foreseen from the beginning, the tragedy. For these foolish birds had set up their home in the hedge that runs by the footpath, in itself a ridiculous enough thing, and then, nominally for protective purposes, I suppose, had used a lichen that did not in the least correspond with the surrounding colour. All this I could have told them, but man is never so helpless as in his relations with birds. Perhaps, it would have been kinder to destroy the nest's founda-

tions at once; but only very strong people can be kind like that. All that was done was to call a committee to inquire into a means of hiding in some way the positively clamorous visibility of the nest. We walked up and down the path re-arranging the branches. Finally we decided that such matters are best left to Fate.

Fate, however, does not seem to think much of birds, for when, after an absence of two or three days, I went to see the nest again, every trace of it had vanished. Some village boys on a Sunday afternoon foray (Sunday afternoon being the deadliest time for all accessible creatures in these parts) had torn the nest bodily from the hedge, and it is probably now on a neighbour's mantelpiece. So much for the toil of two weeks and the maternal solicitude of a week longer, and so much for my reputation as a gentleman among long-tailed tits.

I then went on to the thrush's nest, and behold! it lay on the ground, under the box tree, with one young bird dead beside it. Later, John, the odd man, told the story: he had heard that morning an unusual noise in the direction of the nest, and had even stopped work (that extreme measure!) to see what it was; he found nothing, but could now tell that a cat must have attacked the birds, and the old one have done her best to repulse it, but without success.

Two tragedies in as many days, two families destroyed, two beautiful natural processes brought to nothing!

Of the two depredators the cat is the more monstrous, because whereas a boy unthinkingly, by a kind of sense of duty as a boy, takes a nest whenever he finds it, a cat mercilessly and deliberately marks a nest down, watches the growth of the young birds, and

strikes at the precise moment when they are as big as they can be before flying. I am not blaming the cat—that would be absurd; but I am vexed with her for making my position as an oracle (to the young) so difficult this morning. For the story is not yet all told. I have to add that when the young thrushes were still babies, and before the long-tailed tit had laid at all, a little girl was brought here, and I was glad to be able to show her the nests and say something about the beautiful ways of Nature. That was all right; but this morning she came in again and was for seeing how both broods had progressed, and I had, of course, to tell her of our losses. So far as the tits were concerned the case presented little difficulty, for it comes naturally to even a little girl to think but lightly of the enormities of "horrid boys" (as we called them). But the cat? We have the misfortune to keep a cat here, and to be very fond of it, and the odds are quite heavy that it was this identical cat that consumed the thrushes and destroyed the nest. Under that impression the little girl refused to take any notice of the cat, nor could she understand how we can possibly continue to give such a creature love and shelter. She asked me the most direct questions on the matter, and I had no answers, and now I am a dishonoured thing.

And truly the whole thing is rather a puzzle. Why should a cat that is properly fed, and has its will of the mice, eat the birds of the air? Why should boys be unable to permit a bird to hatch out its eggs in peace? The law of the survival of the fittest hardly applies, for surely a thrush is as fit as a cat, and a long-tailed tit as fit as a boy. I know a dozen boys at least whom I would willingly exchange for the intimacy of a pair of these birds. Of course, it is all right,

really. We all prey on one another, and all in turn are preyed upon. Probably those young thrushes had each eaten some scores of very estimable and life-loving worms; probably the tits had slain insects by the thousand, and equally probably our cat will one night be caught in a trap, and that village boy will enlist and some day fall on a battle-field with a Mauser bullet through his heart. A life for a life, says Nature. And yet one is puzzled still. When man opened the door to let humanity in, he let in a host of doubts and misgivings at the same time.

This is not our only tragedy. There is just now at the farm a little brood of ducklings, who move about ever in a solid phalanx—a little yellow cloud which, though seven ducks compose it, you could at any time cover with a dinner napkin. I never saw such mobilisation. If unity were really strength, this company should be capable of anything. So one might think; and yet the contrary is the fact, for the motive which leads to this excessive gregariousness is not aggression but fear. Collectively, seven yellow ducklings, with weakly, twittering beaks and foolishly limp necks, are no stronger than one; but collectively their courage is greater; and just now they need courage or stimulation very badly. Because of the rats. A day or so ago the little band numbered nine, then it numbered eight, now seven, and to-morrow there may be only six. Hence there is something very pathetic in the sight of these fearful little brothers and sisters crowding against each other in their broad-day passage from one side of the yard to the other. If they feel thus when the sun shines, how must their little hearts beat at night!

Their fear of rats cannot, I think, be more intense than mine. Rats are to me what snakes are to timid

body was cold. A rabbit that could recover from a cat's persecution would, indeed, have an organisation of iron.

The memory of the bright light of fear that inhabited that little rabbit's eyes has for the time being removed all my good feeling for cats. Our kitten may frolic and curvet as she will, and twist her tiny body into a thousand attitudes of freakish and fascinating grace, but she leaves me without enthusiasm. I am tired of cats. Their rapacity is too continual, their cruelty too hideous, their beauty too superficial. Give me a plain, blundering, faithful-hearted, and true-eyed dog—a mongrel, even, if you will—before all the Persians of the Orient, or so I say to-day.

Not that one is profoundly in love with rabbits. Indeed, I cannot rise properly to the rabbit at all, I can only feel sorry for him. To respect him is impossible—his timidity goes beyond all bounds. Man may well be gratified to cause a stampede now and again among the smaller wild animals of his neighbourhood, but when the same stampede occurs very day among the same family, he deems it too much homage. Rooks can at enormous range distinguish between a walking-stick and a gun, between friend and foe, between Saturday and Sunday. Even sparrows discriminate. But rabbits are just fools. A footstep on the ground three hundred yards away starts them for home, no matter how succulent the greenery or how distant the burrow. One almost blushes to think what incredible distances one's punctual and harmless outgoing footfalls cause rabbits to run every morning, and one's returning steps every evening. In our case the warren is hard by the path, and the alarmed rabbit has therefore, in gaining safety, to approach the enemy. "Go back, go back, you little duffers! Finish



your feeding and compose yourselves ! ” one mentally exclaims. But it is to no purpose—here they all come, hundreds of them, in an agony of fear.

A few rabbits attempt courage, but never a one achieves it. They sit up with alert ears and gather together pluck to brave it out ; but by the time you are within fifty yards their hearts fail them, and they break for home. A frightened rabbit never runs straight : he swerves and swerves. This probably he has learned from experience or tradition, for it baulks the sportsman's aim. Nature never did a crueller thing than when she gave rabbits white tails · it makes it possible to shoot them long after it is too dark to see any other quarry. “ Twinkletails ” would be a pretty name for them. One often sees nothing of a rabbit but its flashing scut. Naturalists, I believe, are puzzled to account for it, except as an advantage to aiming man.

Young rabbits have far more enterprise than old. Indeed, rabbits go off sadly, almost as sadly as lambs, which take on stupidity steadily with years. A peculiarity of the young rabbit that is approached from a distance from its abode is to lie still in the fern or grass and sham death or coma. An old rabbit has not wit enough to do even that. One imagines the old rabbit a very treasure-house of counsel and warnings. Man must get a desperately bad character in the warrens.

Our squirrels are less shy than the rabbits. They have more audacity, more grit, more dare-devil. They let us approach within a few feet before moving, and then, quick as birds, with tail outspread, they dart to a tree. More often than not it is not the nearest tree : they keep enough composure to select. A squirrel seems never to lose his head ; a rabbit almost always

does. When a squirrel runs he loops over the ground in the way the sea-serpent travels in pictures. Once the tree is gained, he scampers up a yard or two, on the side farthest from the enemy, and then pauses as suddenly as if an enchanter had bidden him turn to stone. Nothing in nature is more motionless than a wary, watchful squirrel. He clings to the bark, with cocked head and fearful eyes, a matter of half a minute before climbing to the first fork of the boughs. But to say climbing is a mistake; it is not climbing: it is just running, or, better still, going. A squirrel goes up a tree.

The squirrel of the artist sits on its hindquarters, under the shelter of its tail, and nibbles at the nut which its forepaws hold. The position is, indeed, only one remove from saying grace, and reminds one of the child in Stevenson's verse who behaves "mannerly at table." But one does not often catch them in this attitude in the woods. There the squirrel is usually seen making little furtive dashes among the dead leaves on the ground; a tiny red animal, which, were it not for its tail-plume, might be taken at a distance for a rat. Now and then the nursery illustration is realised, but only seldom. Squirrels are very ready to be angry, and they are incapable of disguising their feelings. They are voluble as fishwives. If you would test the squirrel's powers of repartee, you must drive one to the branches of an isolated tree and then rap the trunk with a stick. He will "answer back" as long as you stay there.

One pretty peculiarity touching the squirrel is that we do not associate it with age. We speak of a young rabbit or an old rabbit, a young horse, an old cow, a kitten or a cat, a puppy or a dog; but a squirrel, no matter what its development, is

just a squirrel: that is to say, an inde-scribably wonderful woodland creature, as far removed from our own life and ken as any English animal. The lyrical swiftness of the squirrel partakes of the miraculous; and this, combined with his elusiveness,—though he is a thousand strong in the neighbouring wood,—makes him a creature apart. 'Thousands of persons in this country have never seen a squirrel.

The squirrel is in the main invincibly and joyously untameable, although many a man has kept one as a pet. Compared with a squirrel of the beech grove, the wildest rabbit is domesticated. But, indeed, beside the squirrel all the four-footed creatures of the field are pedestrian, commonplace. Even the hare, with its incredible celerities, is dull compared with this brilliant aeronaut. The squirrel must be emboughed if he is to show in brightest pin. On the ground he is swift and graceful, but his tail impedes instead of assisting him; in a tree, or in mid-air between two trees, he is a miracle of joyous pulsating life, a bird with an additional infusion of nervous fluid, a poem in red fur.

I must now return to the cat. Since where there is a cat there is death, and since you cannot have both birds and a cat, I said that the cat must go. (Her name, by the way, was Bobine Pellicule. We found it on a packet of photographic films, and deeming it too good to be lost, conferred it on her.) And I was the more certain she must go when that evening she caught a little bat and tortured it under a chair in the garden. It was rescued, and turned out to be of extraordinary friendliness, neither scratching nor biting, as tradition alleges of it, but drinking milk, and crawling over our hands and across the table in its velvet cloak like a burlesque Hamlet. But agreeable as

was this recontre with an animal difficult to get upon terms with, I said again that Bobine must go.

Having said it again, I forgot the matter, leaving the manner of its departure to Fate. Fate settled it with a promptness and thoroughness that took the household by the throat, for the very next morning she jumped down the well. It is a deep well, and we have no Johnny Stout within call, and death must have been rapid. Nothing but remorse could follow upon such a tragedy, our original idea of getting rid of the cat being by gift. However, it was useless to mourn over so complete a disaster, and we reconciled ourselves to the inevitable, sorry but relieved. And then gradually we began to realise (as the grappling hooks failed to bring the suicide to the surface) that if a cat were to lay itself out to die with as much inconvenience to its unsympathetic owners as could possibly be arranged, it could not do anything better than just to drown itself in their well. The chain and winch were too light for it to be safe to descend by them, the depth was too great for a ladder to be of any use. Bobine was too slippery for the hooks to catch on. In death this small creature punished my hostility, and punished it increasingly every minute.

To return for a moment to the bats. Chancing to be dining one evening out of doors, I noticed that every now and then, as it grew more dusk, bats were materialised in the most extraordinary sudden way from a corner of the roof. Fetching the glasses, I discovered that our roof at that part was full of them, and they passed in and out under a raised tile. There is nothing swifter or quieter than the way in which bats leave a hole and are instantly on the wing—like young

night thoughts. I say quieter, but as a matter of fact the attentive ear can hear a little squeaky argument before the flight, as though there was a question of precedence to settle. The bat which the cat played with must have rolled off the roof, having left the home too early.

Birds, of course, are not unmixed blessings. They certainly wake one very early, they pull thatch all to pieces, they eat the buds and they eat the fruit. A pair of dandy bullfinches with an irreproachable tailor and perfect manners completely stripped our damson tree of buds two springs ago. The cuckoo, too, is no credit to his race: his arrogance and want of a responsible sense are deplorable, and he sings the same song so many times over that one is ashamed of him. But worse than all are the birds that ruin flowers out of sheer wantonness—a wantonness equal to that of the boys who rob or destroy nests.

I was in the country on the first day of spring this year, and I went at once to a place in the orchard where there are five or six large primrose roots. The flowers were all out, as many as twenty or thirty on each root, but when I knelt down to see them I found that almost every head had been snipped off. This is a bird's doing, and I have never learned the purpose of the deed. Can there be some delicate flavour in the neck of the primrose, or is it wanton destructiveness? I believe the scoundrel is a blackbird.

I remember a letter to the *Spectator* some years ago, in which a correspondent quoted from the margin to a woodcut of a bullfinch in an old black-letter Natural History in the library at Hertford College, Oxford, this implacable note in seventeenth-century handwriting: "A smal fowle. He eateth my apple buds in Spring. Kill hym."

Similarly I would indict the blackbird for thus ruining the most beautiful of flowers with his gold dagger of a bill: "A bold black ravener. He decapitateth my primroses. Behead him." And yet would I? Probably not. More likely would I try to emulate my friend Brother Bengma.

## NOTES

**Oliver Goldsmith:** (1728-1774), was a well-known poet, and essayist of his day. At a time when most writers affected the heavy, artificial, and Latinised style of Dr. Johnson, Goldsmith wrote in a simple, natural style.

His novel, *The Vicar of Wakefield* is a classic of its kind. Here, as in his essays, Goldsmith shows his admiration of the homely virtues of a simple, kind-hearted man. His writings are a delicate satire on the worldly-minded and hypocritical society of his day.

Goldsmith was himself a very simple, kind-hearted man. His generosity, like that of the Man in Black, was fitful and imprudent. But on the whole he is the type of the man of letters loved by all students of literature for the freedom with which he takes his readers into his confidence.

**a humourist:** one who is characterised by a humour, or eccentricity of character. The modern humour, humourist, are used in a different sense. But during the 16th, 17th and 18th centuries, (and sometimes even to-day), the words were used to denote the excessive development of any one element in the character or temperament of a man.

Though he is generous even to profusion, etc: Mark the balance of this sentence. That is, mark how the various clauses of the sentence are arranged, in point of sound and rhythm, round a central pause in the sentence. Collect other examples of balanced sentences. What do you think of the sentence following?

**Amazed:** the word is more emphatic in its meaning now.

**I am surprised that the people are found, etc.** Write a short essay suggesting a solution of the beggar problem in India.

**to discover:** to show. [Very seldom used in this sense now.]

**lighting candles:** 'Safety matches' are a recent invention. They were invented by Walker, of Stockton-on-Tees in 1829.

**reluctantly good:** Why *reluctantly* good?

a living: a benefice; that is, land (or money) set apart for the maintenance of a clergyman in charge of a church. A living in England corresponds to Jagirs that are assigned to temples and the like in India.

He wound us up to be mere machines: a metaphor: he brought us up so that we were *mechanically* moved to pity at the sight of suffering.

gladiators: Roman swordsmen who fought against each other, or against wild animals for the amusement of Roman citizens

Mathematical reasoning: Mathematics is still one of the most popular subjects of study at Cambridge, at one time it was compulsory for a distinguished degree there

Thus shoved from shore: another metaphor. Put it in simpler language

to go into orders: to be a clergyman

to wear a long wig: long wigs and black coats being the recognised dress of the clergy in those days

bnt eats best: a well-deserved satire on the rather irresponsible clergy of the day.

I was tolerably good-natured, etc. What is the effect of repeating this sentiment at the end of these paragraphs?

Miss: no longer used except as a title before the name of an unmarried woman

One note: that is, a 'promissory note,' called a pro-note, for short

to take his place, in prison, that is, Debtors' Prisons were an infamous institution till the middle of the nineteenth century

Tactus: a well-known historian who flourished toward the end of the first century A.D.

decreed an ovation: given a public mark of approval of my conduct

to give away nothing: Do you think the essayist is serious in deducing this moral from the essay? Or do you think it is a satire against those who are extremely selfish, and worldly-minded?

**William Hazlitt: (1778-1830)** A well-known essayist and critic of art and letters. He started life as a painter, but liking literature better, became a recognised authority in matters literary. He knew many of the leading poets of the day, and has left us many interesting accounts of their life and work.

Hazlitt is an excellent example of the *personal* essayist. He has great powers of description in a simple



**Procul, O procul**, etc., from the *Aeneld*, by Virgil, perhaps the greatest of the Roman poets. It means . away, be ye away, irreverent ones.

**A Quaker**: One of a Society of Friends. The Quakers preach simplicity and peace in life.

**Rlding**: the first vowel is pronounced as in *rld*. The word is not connected with 'ride.'

**Incognito**: namelessness, the being nameless in an inn the score: the account or bill.

spent some enviable hours at inns: Hazlitt's collection of Essays, called *Winterslow*, was first written at Winterslow Hutt, an inn on the border of Salisbury Plain.

**St Neot's**: pronounce, St Neets

**Paul and Virginia**: a French story, translated into English by W. H. Williams, in 1796

**Madame D'Arblay**, (1752-1840), better known as Fanny Burney, was a story-writer, very popular in her day.

**New Eloise** by the French philosopher, Rousseau. He brought about, however indirectly, the French Revolution.

**bonne bouche**: literally, a pleasant taste: therefore, a delicious morsel, a titbit.

**In travelling through a wild barren country**: is that really so? What does your experience tell you?

**Hyde Park**: in London, a resort of the fashionable.

**Sir Fopling Flutter**: a character in *The Man of Mode*, a comedy by Etherege, a dramatist of the 17th century.

**Concell**: conception. [Not now used in this sense.]

**Bodleian** the University library in Oxford, perhaps, the oldest public library in England.

**Blenhelm**: the residence of the Duke of Marlborough at Woodstock, eight miles from Oxford.

**For the image of man was not cast down**. France appealed to Hazlitt particularly as the home of the Revolution. He was a very staunch whig.

**Bourbons**. the royal family in France.

**Dr. Johnson**: Samuel Johnson, (1709-1784), the greatest literary figure of his time. He compiled the first English dictionary. He attained eminence not so much because of his literary achievement, as by his personal influence. He was the literary Dictator of his age.

**quaintly finely**. [Rare in this sense, it is a word with varied meanings.]

**Charles Lamb**, (1775-1834), essayist and literary critic. He is the most lovable figure among English

essayists because of the charm of his personality so simply revealed in his essays. \*

He is at his best when he is speaking of himself or his friends. He is always conscious of his reader, but he never mars his work by theatricality or affectation as some of his imitators do. He is always himself; the simple, sensitive humourist, and student of life.

His style is rich and varied. Sometimes it is archaic, and old-fashioned. Sometimes it is simple, and easy, like the flow of fire-side conversation. Now and then it is unmatched for its fine poetic and imaginative sublimity as in *Dream Children*. It is always worth a careful study for its vocabulary, its rhythm, and grace.

Every student of English prose knows, and ought to know, his *Essays of Elia*, every page of which is interesting for one thing or another.

**Mr. Lamb's Works:** The *Essays of Elia* were written under the pen-name, Elia. Lamb loves to mystify his readers by pretending that Lamb and Elia are two different persons.

**I remember L. at School:** this and the following passages are autobiographical.

**Inner Temple:** one of the Inns of Court in London.

**banyan:** the merchant class in India. They are vegetarians as a rule. This is an Anglo-Indian word.

**Ouro equina:** horse-flesh; as coarse in taste as horse-flesh.

**griskin:** a pork chop.

**Tishbite:** The prophet Elijah. This feeding of the prophet by the ravens is alluded to in I Kings XVII, 4 and 6.

**I have been called out of bed:** for very interesting details of the life of a public school boy in England, see Thomas Hughes' *Tom Brown's Schooldays*.

**leads of the wards:** the portion of the wards with flat roofs covered with lead.

**Caligula's milton:** the favourite horse of the Roman Emperor, Caligula. He made it a high priest and consul. It was kept in a marble stable studded with gems.

**In the fables:** see the story of the Donkey with the Lion's Skin in Aesop's Fables.

**Jericho:** Joshua blew his horn so as to bring down the Walls of Jericho; that is, he destroyed its own security.

**Perry:** the then Steward of Christ's Hospital.

the Trojan in the hall of Dido: Aeneas who observed the sculptures illustrating the War of The Trojans. Dido was the Queen of Carthage.

A boy in fetters: happily these inhuman punishments are no longer given now.

Auto da fe: the ceremony attending the trial of those who were judged to be heretics by the Inquisition—a religious court. These judgments were common in Spain, Portugal, and their Colonies during the 13th, 14th, 15th and 16th centuries. The custom lasted as late as 1826.

Watchet weeds: blue garments

disfigurements in Dante: the terrible figures of Inferno, a long poem by the Italian poet, Dante

Ultima Supplicia. the final or extreme punishments

San Benito: an ugly yellow garment painted all over with the figure of devils. It was worn by victims of Auto da fe

the verbs deponent: verbs passive in form but active in meaning

Rousseau and John Locke: Rousseau, the French philosopher, author of *Emile*, and John Locke, English philosopher, author of a treatise on Education anticipated some of the modern theory of education. They emphasised the importance of play in the education of the young

the Samite: Pythagoras who believed in the transmigration of the soul. He was a Greek philosopher. He did not let his pupils speak till they had listened to his lectures for five years.

Goshen: a place of safety

Gideon's miracle: Judges VI 37, 38

Uliantes: the damned, boys who received the punishment and howled

Tartarus: the hell in Greek mythology

Flaccus's quibble about Rex: Horace, a well known Roman poet was called Quintus Horatius Flaccus. His play (quibble) on the word rex is here alluded to. Rex means king in Latin

no comet expounded snorer: comets are long-tailed heavenly bodies that appear in our sky from time to time. They are believed to forebode sinister happenings to mankind.

rabidus furor. his raging frenzy, when his temper had cooled down

the Debates: reports of Parliamentary debates

the country Spectator: a magazine started by Bishop Middleton, one of the old boys of the school

Pepys: pronounce peeps

Cicero's *De Amicitia*: the Roman rhetorician, Cicero's, philosophic Essay on Friendship.

regni novites: a new regime, a newly established empire, such as India was in those days.

the dark pillar not yet turned: because the early promise of Coleridge's life was blighted by the misfortunes of his later life, and the habit he acquired of drugging himself with opium. In spite of all his failings, Coleridge was in fact and achievement the greatest man of letters of his time

Nireus formosus of the school: the Adonis; the most handsome boy in the school.

**Washington Irving:** (1783-1859.) American writer and traveller. He is well-known as a miscellaneous writer on American subjects. His *Sketch Book* is a work of great literary merit and deservedly popular. There is a dash of burlesque and good-natured satire in all his writings

Irving's style is ornate, rich in colour and epithet. His balanced sentences are reminiscent of Addison, and other eighteenth century essayists. His diction is sometimes artificial, but always well worth a careful study.

**Gothic architecture:** this style of building originally developed in France spread to the whole of Europe. It was very popular during the Middle Ages—the 12th to the 15th centuries. Its characteristic features are pointed arches, tall pillars, and high vaults as opposed to the round arches and flat roofs of the Roman style. Some of the best European Cathedrals have been built in this style.

**the season of Advent:** the period including the four Sundays before Christmas

**Jubilee:** in Hebrew this word means the blast of a trumpet: thus some of the most important religious festivals among the Jews were announced to the people.

**One warm generous flow:** note how frequently adjectives add colour and meaning to Irving's phrases: ample boards; sharp touchings; spirited reliefs; and many others throughout this and the next essay.

**lustihood:** strength: an uncommon word.

**Waits:** those who go about singing carols at night during Christmas

**Some say that: Hamlet, Act I**

**I had finished my toilet:** this essay is a concrete illustration of the general sentiments expressed in the previous Essay. Irving

wrote Bracebridge Hall expressing his love of the English rural life lived about the manor house

the conquest of England by the Normans under William  
 Curriclo: A two wheeled carriage drawn by two horses  
 grew of a warmer complexion: became a little obscene  
 black-letter: old English or Gothic type imitated by early  
 printers from the actual handwriting in MSS of the time. So  
 called because of its black face and angular outlines

Covenanters: those who stood up for the Solemn League and  
 Covenant for the defence of the Presbyterian religion and for  
 'the honour and happiness of the King, and the peace and  
 safety of the three Kingdoms of England, Scotland, and Ireland'

Queen Bess: Queen Elizabeth of England

Methinks: a survival from old English, still considered an  
 old-fashioned expression

Thomas De Quincey, (1785-1859), was for over  
 twenty-five years a regular contributor to several  
 magazines. He wrote mainly on literature, art, and  
 rhetoric. But by far the most interesting portion of his  
 work is autobiographical

He was very sensitive, precocious, and imaginative  
 as a boy. He could speak Greek fluently at fifteen. He  
 was deeply affected by the death of a sister. Early in  
 life he wandered about in Wales on an allowance of a  
 guinea a week, he retained the impressions of this tour  
 throughout his life. His poetic gifts, and his love of  
 nature make his writings remarkable for their charm and  
 idealism

Under the influence of opium he produced work that  
 is generally brilliant, sometimes diffuse and discursive.  
 But even his digressions are interesting and suggestive

His style is rich in diction and varied in rhythm; and  
 his longer sentences have at times the organ peal of  
 Milton. Bewildering sometimes in the copiousness of  
 his images, he carries his readers' imagination with him,  
 scarcely allowing him a pause to think. His *Confessions*  
*of an Opium Eater* is not only an exquisite piece of  
 autobiography, but also one of our best examples of  
 heightened impassioned prose

*Footnotes* to the text of De Quincey's Essays are of varied interest. They show the enormous extent of his reading, and the curious points of ancient scholarship and folk-lore in which he was deeply interested. Sometimes as in this essay they also illuminate details of his life.

the great north roads: One of the most ancient and frequented highways of Great Britain is the road leading from London to Edinburgh.

you find yourself but one wave in a total Atlantic: Mark the skill with which the writer conveys to us his impression of the greatness of London as compared to the insignificance of an individual howsoever important in his own sphere of life.

hurrying figures of men and women: these sentiments are even more forcibly brought home to a visitor to the London of to-day.

Uxbridge and Watford: what De Quincey describes as the suburbs and approaches to London of his day are now parts of it. Her suburbs now extend many a mile further out: She is mightier than ever.

*inopes nos copia fecit: our plenty made us poor.*

Mrs. Malaprop: a character in Sheridan's play, *The Rivals*. She is known for her exquisite blunders in the use of words.

the Birmingham Cape: a fraud, a cheap imitation of a Cape. Birmingham's extensive factories produce in mass what used to be produced in very small quantities by the skilled workmen of the world.

told by one: Dr. Johnson.

imbrices: tiers rising one above the other.

they are not sinecures: he plays upon the literal meaning of sinecure, without care.

*soi-disant: self-styled*

also forced into manifestation: a sincere poet must express his inmost thoughts in song. He craves for the sympathy of his fellow men.

*fetes: pronounce as if fates.*

passionate sadness: De Quincey is using the expression in a higher, æsthetic sense. an exalted mood in which our finest sensibilities are touched, and yet we are not in a state of restlessness.

gladness and pomp is: the singular verb, because gladness and pomp are identified as one.

Beethoven: the great German composer.

fagging: a system which authorises grown up senior boys in an English Public School to employ younger boys to do little errands for them. They are punished if they refuse to carry out the orders of their seniors.

**Mary Russell Mitford:** (1787-1855), attempted several types of literary work in her day. Her dramas are now forgotten but her miscellaneous prose communicated mostly to the *London Magazine* is still widely read and enjoyed.

*Our Village*, from which this extract is taken, is a series of very well-defined pen-pictures. There is a very precise and terse phrasing in all that she writes; some of her sentences are very happily turned. Her pen moves with ease and grace as she describes country manners, scenery, and character, with all of which she was very intimately familiar.

**fete:** a French word now commonly used in English, pronounce the same as fate

**Comme il y en a peu** freely rendered as 'like whom there are few'

**Lothario:** a character in Rowe's *Fair Penitent*. He is the type of the handsome libertine.

**pis-aller:** last resource. French, pronounce pizahla

**billet-doux** love-letter

**Grimaldi, Joseph** (1779-1837), came of a very talented family of clowns. He made his first appearance as an infant dancer at the age of three. He was the last of the great pantomime actors of the old school.

**John Henry Newman**, (1801-1890), was better known to his contemporaries as a theologian. He was educated at Trinity College, Oxford, joined the ministry, and became Vicar of St. Mary's in Oxford. He distinguished himself early as a very thoughtful speaker with great charm of manner. His life was passed in a sincere investigation of religious truth, and he was ultimately led to profess the Roman Catholic Faith.

Newman was a man of great culture, and charm of personality. The gracefulness and sweetness of his mind find an inevitable expression in all his writings, prose or poetry. He is always at his best in prose of a thoughtful argumentative kind. But neither his learning, nor the

care with which he wrote, encumbers his style. It is clear, supple, exquisitely expressive. He is easy and urbane, ironic or sublime, indignant or appealing at will. He is always in search of the right thought, and the right word. And this search leads him to the creation of a prose at once lovable and praiseworthy

**Gentlemen:** originally delivered as a lecture to the students of the Catholic University, Dublin.

**Faculty:** a department in a University devoted to the advancement of a particular branch of learning.

**a writer:** Lawrence Sterne, (1713-1768), an English miscellaneous writer. His best known works are *Tristram Shandy*, and *A Sentimental Journey*.

**periods:** sentences

**over-curious:** elaborate; an older sense of curious is here implied.

**Benjamin, etc.,** see Genesis XXX, 23 to end.

**I grant that human literature:** see how clear and forceful is his expression in this and the following sentences

**Literature:** In Latin *Littera* means writing.

**must belong to some one person:** compare the saying 'the style is the man'

**its own double:** that is, its image.

**The man of thought:** written in imitation of a prevalent oriental style.

**in a great University:** Oxford Newman tells us elsewhere how one Mr. White, Professor of Arabic in the University, hired a curate to turn his unadorned style into 'elaborate periods'

**facit indignatio versus:** indignation fashions verse That is, a poet indignant at the evils of his times pours forth his wrath in verse

**Poeta nascitur, non fit:** the poet is born not made

**the vision of Mirza:** by Addison, the editor of the *Spectator* from 1711.

**Cicero, Shakespeare:** some serious modern readers will hardly subscribe to this view Both in Cicero and in Shakespeare there is a good deal that is redundant. But that does not mean that the redundant too is not an expression of their personality.

**os Magna Sonaturum:** style expressive of great thoughts

**the ancient critic:** Horace.

**Mens Magna in Corpore Magno:** magnificent mind in a magnificent body.

**They have had many rough copies:** As Newman's best work had.



**Apollo Belvidere:** the famous statue in the Vatican, the residence of the Popes of Rome

**The poet's eye:** from Shakespeare's *A Midsummer Night's Dream*

he is said to have transcribed: some great writers of prose, Newman and Stevenson among them, modelled their early efforts on the styles of writers like Addison, Gibbon, and Hazlitt

A great author takes his native language: that is, style is not only individual, but also national. Every language has a genius, an idiom of its own

**Job:** pronounce the o as in old

I shall then merely sum up. mark the clear, concise, pointed summing up, note the simple eloquence of the paragraph beginning, 'He writes passionately, because he feels keenly'

**Copia verborum** the copious flow of language

**Nil molitur inepte** 'he enters on no pointless task'

**Quo fit,** etc 'Therefore it is that the whole life of an ancient writer is shown to us as a picture dedicated in thanks to the gods'

**Robert Louis Stevenson, (1850-1894),** a Scottish essayist, poet, and writer of romances *The Treasure Island* is a master-piece of its kind, and embodies the perfection of delight to a boyish imagination

Stevenson has a fresh, joyous, and individual outlook on life. His essays breathe these qualities in every line that he writes. He adds to them the charm of a sweet, and lovable personality. He has strong affinities with Elia—Charles Lamb—whom he assiduously imitated in manner, though not in style

In point of style Stevenson followed many great writers of the past. But by his industry, and careful study of words, he evolved a style that is a perfect example of its kind—precise, expressive, uniform; and at times elaborate and manneristic. It is a style adequate for all the purposes of a shrewd wit and penetrating observation that Stevenson possessed. But it never soars, it never touches our profoundest feelings. It has neither eloquence, nor sublimity.

Nevertheless Stevenson is one of the most popular of our essayists: mainly because he makes the affairs

of every day life his special theme, because he clothes them with the ideal light of an experience that deliberately saw life through the rosy hues of romance.

Icarus, the son of Daedalus, an Athenian architect and artificer. After they had been cast into the Labyrinth in Crete by Minos, they escaped to Sicily flying on artificial wings. The father reached the island in safety, but Icarus flew too near the sun, the wax of his wings melted, and he fell into the sea and was drowned.

Therefore in our context, Icarus would mean a young, ambitious man.

Samuel Budget(t): a prosperous merchant of Bristol. His life had been written under the title - 'The Successful Merchant,' who goes to sea with its life of adventure.

never to forget an umbrella: never to take a chance, to be so prudent as to cover all risks. In England the weather is very uncertain.

Benjamin Franklin, (1706-1790), an American writer, and scientist. He wrote his autobiography, showing how from a poor boy he rose to be the first American with international fame.

Binney, the Non-conformist minister, who wrote a book called, 'Is it possible to make the best of both worlds?'

the charge of Balaclava in the Crimean War of 1854. This charge has been rendered famous by Tennyson's poem, 'The Charge of the Light Brigade.'

Lyons Mail: a drama by Charles Reade, a Victorian novelist. It is not of much literary merit.

certain admissions with regard to the early inhabitants of Britain. They were a primitive savage people.

It is in vain to seek for consistency, etc., you must have observed how neatly the essayist can sum up a general truth. His writings are full of such aphorisms.

Ainsworth, (1805-1882), author of many historical novels not much read now.

Si jeunesse savait, etc. 'If youth knew, if age had the power,

savoir: wisdom

Atys: A shepherd of Phrygia. He mutilated himself to please the goddess he worshipped.

the festival that was never to be: old age.

After the sun is down, etc. Note the simplicity and grace of this sentence.

Hernani: a drama by Victor Hugo, The French novelist. His last novel: "Lothair."

**Astrea Radux:** 'the goddess of Justice come back.' Astrea, the goddess of Justice was said to have reigned on earth in the Golden Age. Then she left the world, but it was believed that she would come again some day.

**Cincinnatus** was appointed a dictator in Rome. When his term expired he went back to his life as a farmer.

**Shelley:** a great poet of the nineteenth century. He was a passionate lover of truth and liberty. He was expelled by the authorities of the Oxford University for holding unorthodox views about Christianity.

**Calvin,** a native of Geneva, he founded a sect of Protestants. His *Institutes* was written when he was only 25. This book is remarkable for its logical exposition, and clarity of expression.

**Knox:** a Scotch religious reformer.

**Sister Nivedita,** (Margaret E. Noble), an English woman who made India her home, and the uplift of Indian women her vocation. Her life was spent mostly in Bengal where her name became a household word in Hindu homes.

She was a very sincere and earnest writer. Steeped in ancient history and legend she wrote a prose that is singularly delightful in cadence and purity of diction. There is a touch of mysticism, and oriental imagery—enough to make it distinct from other work of a similar nature done in England.

Her *Footfalls of Indian history* from which this very vivid study of Benares is taken is one of her best known works.

**Pathan:** the pre Moghul type of architecture.

the great message pealed out: the message preached by the Buddha.

**gerua:** the colour in which the robes of Sadhus and Sanyasis are dyed in India, it is a pleasant mixture of red and yellow.

**pallimpsest:** writing on parchment was sometimes erased to make room for the writing of a second and even subsequent manuscripts.

**John Bunyan:** the author of *The Pilgrim's Progress*.

**William Blake:** the mystic poet and artist of England. His work helped the coming on of the poetic reaction started by Wordsworth and his contemporaries.

**batti:** a small earthen lamp in which several kinds of vegetable oils are used. It has only a wick without a burner or chimney.

**Benares is more than the precincts:** mark the clear and well-ordered advance of the essay through successive stages

**Jnanam:** the Knowledge

**Conclerge:** a French word · pronounce **Kansiyah.**

**H. G. Wells:** (born 1866), is a living writer of international fame. He first made his mark as a writer of fantastic scientific stories in which he tried to visualise the probable future of mankind. Most of his work is done with a moral purpose, problems of sociology, public welfare, peace and war, form the general background of his best work.

Wells is a writer who has gradually perfected the technique of his art. He has profited by the criticisms of his serious reviewers. He writes a simple, severely chaste style at his best, though in the hurried productions of modern times he has often sacrificed both style and technique to vie with his prolific contemporaries.

Among his notable works may be mentioned *The New Machiavelli*, *An Englishman looks at the World*, *Kipps*, and *Tono Bungay*.

**The Jungle** is an extract from *the Research Magnificent*, story of a man (Benham), who has come to believe that man must cast out fear, live a hard and even dangerous life, if he is to progress to his destined goal of perfection. Benham travelling abroad to find support for his view comes to India.

**Strophe and antistrophe:** the two pauses followed by movements in different directions in a Greek Ode, especially as elaborated by the Greek lyricist Pindar.

**E. V. Lucas:** (born 1868), is an essayist and journalist distinctly English in outlook and humour. He is known as a biographer of Charles Lamb.

He is said to be among the best writers of modern prose. He is a regular contributor to *Punch*, where

his manner and his wit have delighted more than one generation of readers

His tastes incline him to the eighteenth century. There is a smack of the older prose in his style, however without its affectations or archaisms

More recently he has taken to fiction and drama